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The Necessity of Parties

"Do not be deceived by appearances. . . . The sternest purpose lurks under the highest frivolity."

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr.

Morton Kondracke on Our Rafshoonian Foreign Policy

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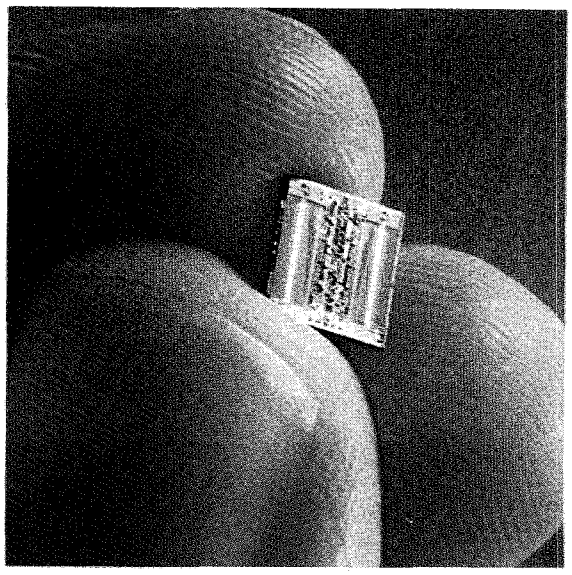

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TRB

from Washington
January 13, 1979

A Rerun of 1919?

I have had a love affair with Washington for many years, and it has broken my heart many times. I suspect that it is going to do so again this year. I cannot believe that the Senate will ratify the forthcoming SALT treaty, to restrain strategic arms. Yet if 34 senators vote "No" there will be no limit, I fear, to the consequent US-Soviet nuclear arms race. It takes only 34 senators to defeat a treaty. It has happened before.

Let me go back a bit. Years ago, in the Harding administration, a tall, gawky, self-conscious youngster came to Washington marveling at the nation's drive "back to normalcy." Since this reference is autobiographical, let me say that I had enlisted in Mr. Wilson's crusade "to make the world safe for democracy" and that it seemed to me in all innocence a goal worth giving one's life for. The Washington I came to laughed at the war I had enlisted in, and said that the dream I had followed was preposterous. (I have heard recently of a veteran back from Vietnam, with the stump of an arm, taunted by stay-at-homes who said, "It serves you right"!) My feelings were not bitter in that far-off day, for I had made no great sacrifice—surely my elders knew better than I! But I pondered, and wondered, and the episode left a mark. Few in present-day Washington, I guess, have as sensitive a feeling about Section 2, Article II, of the Constitution giving the president the right to make treaties, *"provided two-thirds of the senators present concur."*

It was 60 years ago this July that Wilson returned from the peace conference to find the Senate in an ugly mood, and debate over the League of Nations and Versailles treaty already begun (as it already has begun today over the SALT treaty). That was the dream—a League of Nations, a parliament of man, and a court to settle its disputes. Wilson took his case to the country, pleading with superb eloquence that the "dear ghosts" of fallen Americans called for ratification and forecasting (accurately) a second world war if it were rejected. At all times, during the prolonged Senate debate, more than three-fourths favored some League; they could not agree on which League. They voted twice—November 19, 1919, and March 19, 1920. Ultimate vote: 49 ayes, 35 nays—so ratification failed. The world was stunned. Incidentally, 12 of the Senate's 96 did not vote; at least eight of these 12 favored ratification. World War II arrived punctually as Wilson predicted.

That still left Elihu Root's World Court. America wouldn't join, but in 1946 the idea was revived; the Senate committee approved unanimously and the Senate approved it too, 62 to two. But the emasculating "Connally Amendment" was added during floor debate; the Court couldn't hear issues involving domestic American matters, and the US should be sole judge of what was "domestic." All US presidents since then have opposed the Connally Amendment. Senator Hubert Humphrey tried to get it repealed in 1959, but failed. Other nations have followed America's restrictive policy and the World Court, today, is a wraith.

As another example of America's wary isolationism, cited by President Carter only last month, 83 other nations have signed the UN's genocide convention. "Despite the support of every president since 1948," Mr. Carter said, the US still hasn't signed.

Take normalization of relations with China (heartily approved by this correspondent). Was the split with China ever necessary? Chou En-lai came to the Geneva Conference in June, 1954, looking for friends in the West. John Foster Dulles wouldn't shake hands, and stalked out. The China Lobby, led by Henry Luce's *Time* and *Life*, denounced fraternization: Chou was "a political thug and professional assassin," said *Life*. *Life*'s correspondent, Godfrey Blunden, called Chou "a ruthless intriguer—a conscienceless liar, a saber-toothed political assassin." In 1971, reviewing those grotesque events, Harrison Salisbury called them "madness; clinical paranoia." Yet suspicion and hate are always just below the surface in contending theologies; the venom could be injected again over SALT. Said Joe McCarthy of the "loss" of China, February 9, 1950 at Wheeling, West Virginia: "This must be the product of a great conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous venture in the history of man!" Now partisans here are demanding, "Who lost Iran?"

(I found no reference to old Luce crusades in *Time*'s cool account last week of Teng Hsiao-p'ing as "Man of the Year." In 1937, Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek were *Time*'s "Man and Wife of the Year." The thought constantly intrudes whether, with a little more realism and understanding, or simple common sense, Korea, Vietnam and the boycott of China had to happen. As Anne O'Hare McCormick once wrote: "Nations never go out to meet destiny. It always catches up with them at an unexpected turn of the road.")

The most important single activity of world politics is the prevention of nuclear war. The two superpowers have over 13,000 strategic nuclear warheads aimed at each other, capable of destroying each other. In the meantime nuclear weaponry is proliferating; six or seven nations possess it and it can hardly be kept secret; in a few years, probably, small nations, or terrorist groups, will have blackmail weapons. Will the superpowers cooperate to meet this shared danger?

The SALT talks began in 1969. For three years Nixon and Brezhnev exchanged visits: "Upon these bridges," said Nixon in Annapolis, June 5, 1974, "we are erecting a series of tangible economic and cultural exchanges that will bind us more closely together." He called it an enduring "structure of peace." The question now, perhaps this year, is between continued detente, and a new, more venomous round in the arms race. The Kremlin leaders are old men. Brezhnev has tied his personal prestige to the forthcoming agreement. But almost every day new weapons are invented.

An hysterical woman called me up from Los Angeles the other day: she had seen the doomsday film of the American Conservative Union warning that "annihilation is 20 minutes away." They have bought time on 207 TV stations, so far, to show it. A new group of 170 retired generals and admirals are banded to rouse America to its peril.

And there *is* hazard, of course. SALT comes down to confidence in our negotiators. The details are stupefyingly technical. The public will decide on the basis of its faith in Jimmy Carter, and such faith is apt to run low in the midst of an economic recession. In a Congress of 535 members, only 34 senators (if all vote) have veto power. I can't resist the feeling that I am seeing a rerun of 1919.

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AMERICAN INCOME LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY of INDIANA

Serving America's Union Families

Comparative Financial Review

	Years ended December 31, 1977	1976
Income		
Life premiums	$22,340,297	$16,150,742
Accident and health premiums	25,683,413	23,593,214
Investment and other income	4,799,481	4,090,525
Total income	52,823,191	43,834,481
Benefits and expenses		
Life claims and other benefits	4,126,231	3,735,055
Accident and health claims	12,430,024	11,644,002
Increase in liability for future policy benefits	12,196,239	8,711,984
Amortization of policy acquisition costs	5,183,133	4,431,061
Commissions	5,943,151	5,224,771
General expenses and insurance taxes	5,869,697	5,652,642
Dividends to policyholders	298,064	299,032
	46,046,539	39,698,547
Income before income taxes and realized investment gains (losses)	6,776,652	4,135,934
Provision for income taxes		
Current	—	—
Deferred	1,909,150	1,209,252
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	4,867,502	2,926,682
Realized investment gains (losses)	11,364	356,057
Net income	$ 4,878,866	$ 3,282,739
Earnings per share		
Income before realized investment gains (losses)	$ 2.88	$ 1.76
Realized investment gains (losses)	.01	.21
Net income	$ 2.89	$ 1.97

Assets	$116,000,000
Insurance in Force	$1,289,599,000

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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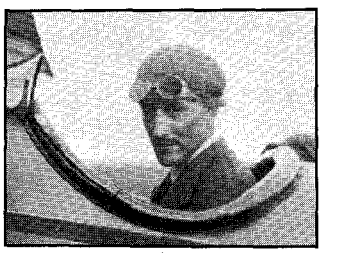
THE NEW REPUBLIC

January 13, 1979

Up in the Air, Junior Birdmen



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Last September 25, a small private plane crashed into a Pacific Southwest Airways jetliner over San Diego, sending 144 people to their deaths. It was the worst aviation disaster in American history and the first mid-air collision involving an airliner in six years. Like most major airplane crashes, this one ignited a bitter controversy. Airlines and professional pilots' groups took the opportunity to lambaste the Federal Aviation Administration for what they regarded as foot-dragging on new safety measures. The president of the Air Line Pilots Association complained that "the only thing that forces an FAA rule is to kill enough people." The crash, investigations revealed, was something of a freak accident—the pilots had been warned by the San Diego airport controller, but the airliner saw yet another small plane and failed to realize that a different one was close to it. The small plane's pilot was practicing an instrument approach, and so was wearing a special hood which obstructed his vision. He may have changed radio frequencies just as the warning was made, thus missing it. But the FAA nonetheless eventually conceded that its procedures had been partly to blame for the collision. On December 27, Administrator Langhorne Bond proposed a new set of rules which he said would dramatically increase the safety of American aviation. The changes would raise safety standards at 44 airports by designating them as "terminal control areas." Only planes with special equipment receiving specific permission from the air traffic controller may enter these areas; student pilots are banned completely. The new rules also would provide air traffic control facilities at 80 additional smaller airports and improve landing systems at others. And they would lower the floor for "controlled airspace" from 18,000 feet to 10,000 feet east of the Mississippi and in most of Calfornia and 12,500 feet everywhere else. Any pilot flying above this floor would have to file a flight plan with the FAA and keep in touch with the ground en route.

The FAA's proposed changes would make aviation safer, but unfortunately they would cost $50 million. This cost will be borne not by private pilots, whose proliferation makes the changes necessary, but by the nation's taxpayers. Subsidizing general aviation in this way makes even less sense than the many other subsidies private airplane owners receive. The new buildings, equipment, and controllers are needed only because there are so many private planes in the sky.

Government policies in the US encourage private flying as it is encouraged nowhere else. This country has three times more pilots than all of the rest of the world, along with the most benevolent rules governing private aviation. Last year 4476 private planes crashed, killing 1395 people. Compared to traveling on a commercial airliner, flying in a private plane is a risky proposition. In 1977, for example, the accident rate in general aviation, measured by the total number of accidents per 100,000 hours flown, was 35 times higher than in commercial aviation. The fatality rate was 29 times higher. But private pilots are not dangerous only to themselves. Much of what risk there is in flying on a commercial airliner lies in the possibility of colliding with a smaller plane. Last year there were 72 near-collisions between commercial airliners and private planes. There are 185,000 private airplanes in the US and the number is growing by 1000 a month. Part of the explanation for this is sociological.

But government policies also encourage general aviation as if it served some public purpose beyond giving pleasure to wealthy individuals. Private planes and pilots get all sorts of breaks from the FAA and the nation's airports. The FAA, at the direction of Congress, always has treated general aviation as more or less of equal importance with commercial aviation. Airports getting federal funds (which means all of the larger ones) are required by law to provide service to private planes, even if it interferes with airline operations. At Washington's National Airport, a badly congested facility owned by the federal government, private planes take up 26 percent of landing slots. In

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practice this policy of nondiscrimination means that a weekend pilot in his Cessna gets the same treatment as a jumbo airliner carrying 300 passengers. If those 300 passengers have to wait on account of that one private pilot, well, too bad.

General aviation also gets subsidies from airlines, commercial passengers, and taxpayers. The airports they use generally are paid for in part from federal funds raised through taxes on commercial air fares and other levies. Local authorities usually issue bonds, which are repaid through tax revenues. In most airports private planes have to pay only a token fee to land. At Washington's Dulles airport, also federally owned, a typical small plane can land for 75 cents, any time of day. These fees frequently are based on the weight of the plane, which means that airliners have to pay more. This even though small planes tend to tie up operations longer than commercial jets. Being more vulnerable to turbulence, they have to wait longer in order to land safely behind a big plane. Most airport revenues don't come from landing fees, but from charges for such "concessions" as passenger gates, ticket gates and hangars. By practically giving away their most valued commodity—landing rights—and charging for other items, airports shift the cost of their operations and facilities from what should be their least-valued customers to those that perform the most useful function.

Another important subsidy of private flying comes through the Internal Revenue Code. For many American corporations, a company jet is more important as a status symbol than as a practical business aid. Perhaps this fascination with flying helps to compensate for the decline of the entreprenurial spirit in American capitalism, which once placed the businessman in the pantheon of rugged individualists. Whatever the reason, flying around in private airplanes is one of the most common examples of high-level consumption disguising itself as a tax-deductible business expense. The case of Bert Lance, who got himself in trouble with the Senate for (among other things) using a National Bank of Georgia plane to fly to the Mardis Gras and to University of Georgia football games, was unique only in the attention it got, not in the attitudes and practices it reflected. Of course even more than the three-martini lunch, it is a break available only to a very few.

The FAA's critics, principally the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, see the new rules that followed the San Diego disaster as an attempt to cut down on air traffic, allegedly because existing facilities can't handle it all. The AOPA may be partly right: the boom in general aviation in the last decade has seriously taxed both the FAA and many airports. But the FAA merely is pursuing the right aim in the wrong way. The reason people fly private planes so much is that the government positively encourages them to do so, by granting them a near-equal status with commercial aviation, allowing businesses to write off the cost of using their own planes and subsidizing their use of federally funded airports. The government shouldn't actively discourage the use of private planes, except when necessary for safety's sake. But neither should it impose taxes on its citizens or inconvenience—and even endanger—commercial travelers in order to promote general aviation, as it has done in the past. The sentimental attachment to the private airplane has been very expensive, both in lives and in money.

Carter's foreign policy spectacular flops.

The Zbig & Jerry Show

"Massive applause throughout the nation" is what President Carter said he expected from his announcement of normalization between the United States and China. Indeed, he seems to have expected two months of almost nonstop massive applause during December 1978 and January 1979. What a series of spectaculars the White House seems to have had in store for us: an Egyptian-Israeli peace settlement, a SALT agreement and a summit with Brezhnev, normalization with China and a summit with Teng. The big three items of American foreign policy would have been accomplished and celebrated as one televised masterstroke after another. And on top of all that, a moderate OPEC price increase, maybe the survival of the shah of Iran, and the summit at Guadeloupe, where the leaders of France, Germany and England would show the American people how much they respect American leadership. With book by Zbigniew Brzezinski and staging and production by Gerald Rafshoon, the whole performance would have been a diplomatic smash hit and would have made President Carter, who has been sagging in the polls again lately, a statesman superstar.

There is nothing wrong with pyrotechnical extravaganzas in politics. The underlying theory is straight out of Machiavelli. "Nothing causes a prince to be so much esteemed as great enterprises giving proof of prowess," Machiavelli wrote. The successful prince, he said, "has continually contrived great things, which have kept his subjects' minds uncertain and astonished, and occupied in watching their result. And these actions have arisen one out of the other, so that they have left little time for men to settle down and act against him." The sensations scheduled for December and January almost surely were not arranged for mere domestic political advantage—say, to frighten potential Democratic rivals of the 1980 presidential race. Rather,

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Correspondence

Sinister schemes of the rich?

To the editors:

Your article on the 1978 Revenue Act ("How the Rich Stay Rich," *TNR*, December 9), is distorted and inaccurate. Deferring the carryover basis rules of the 1976 Revenue Act, which closed the loophole that allowed appreciation on property at death to avoid capital gains tax, was not a sinister scheme of the super-rich rammed through Congress at 3 a.m. while innocent journalists were abed. Everyone who follows developments in the tax law knew that carryover basis was going to be deferred; if some journalists were unaware of this, it is because they were lazy—they were not deliberately deceived.

The pre-1976 rule that allowed appreciation at death to avoid capital gains tax was surely a loophole, but the carryover basis cure, which required the heirs to take the decedent's cost, was hideously complex and just didn't work. Deferral was needed to give Congress time to study the problem and work out a solution that could be administered by the Internal Revenue Service and understood by taxpayers.

Your scenario showing how inherited wealth is favored over the investments made by common people is also distorted. Capital gains have traditionally been given favored tax treatment because they normally accrue over many years and our progressive rate structure would tax them at a higher rate than ordinary income if appreciaton occurring over a 10-year period all had to be taxed in one year in which property was sold. There is nothing sinister about the capital gains deduction. Common people may have to pay normal tax on their E Bond and savings bank interest, but so do millionaires. Common people also get a proportionately better tax break for their capital gains than do wealthy people, a fact conveniently ignored by your article.

Finally, as a tax lawyer I resent your implication that the complexities of the Internal Revenue Code have been inserted by me and my colleagues to protect our wealthy clients. In fact, the only organized force working for tax simplification during the last few years has been the tax bar. We have testified before Congress and written articles in tax publications urging simplification but, unfortunately, our message has not been heeded by Congress. We are not all a bunch of evil conservatives trying to save our wealthy clients' money. Some of us even read *The New Republic*.

Peter L. Faber
Rochester, New York

To the editors:

How the rich stay rich poses troubling problems for a society that aspires to equality of opportunity, and perhaps even for one that espouses equal liberty. Your essay reminds us of one of Congress's failures to deal with these issues.

However, you exaggerate the problem somewhat, and I think that you mislocate it. The capital gains accumulating before death don't quite "escape tax forever," because heirs pay inheritance taxes on the assessed value at death. The capital gains, therefore, escape capital gains tax but not inheritance tax. Whether this is justifiable depends largely, I should think, upon whether the inheritance tax law is appropriately structured.

John T. Wilcox
Binghamton, New York

A man of hubris and poetry

To the editors:

I am compelled to make two points about Max Lerner's review of Eugene McCarthy's *America Revisited* (*TNR*, December 2).

First I believe that Mr. Lerner has in one sense misunderstood the intent of Mr. McCarthy's book. *America Revisited* is not a commentary on *Democracy in America*. Since it not McCarthy's purpose to "get at the heart of the work" of Tocqueville, it is not very germane to complain that he does not. The book is about America, not Tocqueville. The Frenchman's thought is being used as a framework for analysis and a basis of comparison.

Second, I believe what Lerner sees as the principal failure of McCarthy's book is really one of its principal strengths. He finds that whereas Tocqueville was given to making "broad theoretical formulations," McCarthy is not. Lerner writes: "Where Tocqueville reached for beliefs McCarthy is skeptical of everyone and everything including himself. . . Where Tocqueville was constantly forming patterns and the patterns beyond patterns, McCarthy's strength lies in his quizzical concreteness." Yet this strength is seen by Lerner as inferior or less desirable than the strengths of Tocqueville. What is not at all clear to me is why he should think so.

I believe Mr. McCarthy's hesitancy to engage in grand theorizing is profoundly appropriate for our time. McCarthy's intellectual work is also consistent with his political work. While the latter has so often involved a challenge to the arrogance of power, the former is grounded in an awareness of the potential arrogance of knowledge. The two forms of hubris are closely related, particularly in the American experience. We were the country that could figure out the solution to any problem and then employ whatever was needed to alleviate it.

Eugene McCarthy represents an alternate vision of intellectual and political power. It is not confident or proud. It *is* rational and hopeful. It is a vision which resists the management of politics and the marketing of knowledge. Lerner has correctly detected McCarthy's eye for the concrete. It is the eye of a poet. McCarthy the poet wrote of a certain group of insects "they have grown fat on the dead wood of the tree of knowledge."

Keith Burris
University of Pittsburgh

Blowing in the wind

To the editors:

Re: "Hugh Carey is Nobody's Guru" (*TNR*, December 2). I, a Californian, am extremely impressed with Hugh Carey. As my husband says, "it's a shame California doesn't have a man of Hugh's acumen." As for our dear governor's statement that 1978 would be the year of mental health in California, well, all I can do is laugh. Jerry Brown goes the way the wind blows, not with his personal convictions like Carey.

Mary Davis
Valencia, California

More idiocies

To the editors:

It was not entirely clear what aspect of the performance by the "bawling

(continued on page 40)

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1979 is the year of SALT and the Carter White House apparently wanted a big send-off to launch the treaty on its way through the Senate. For Carter, ratification of a SALT treaty is both a political survival issue and, in good conscience, important for the safety of the world. In the Senate, men really are settling down to act against Carter. The White House strategy—and not a bad one—was to clothe the president in such an aura of statesmanship and success that no small band of nay-saying dukes could stand effectively against him.

It was a good political strategy, all right. Unfortunately, it has been muffed in the execution. Instead of one excellent action arising out of another, the administration has served up a series of flawed performances. It could not bring off a Middle East settlement by its December 17 deadline, and the president began acting emotionally against Israel in a way that only retarded progress. Saudi Arabia, which is scared by events in Iran and by US inability to do anything about them, and is not persuaded that the United States can settle the Arab-Israel dispute, was unable or unwilling to hold down prices at the OPEC meeting. The administration thought that normalization of relations with China would induce the Soviet Union into a hurry-up signing of a SALT accord. The White House evidently thought that Brezhnev would make a dash to beat Teng Hsiao-ping to Washington in January, but Brezhnev said, "No, not playing."

Instead of keeping his subjects and opponents dazzled, President Carter has succeeded in setting them to caviling about almost every action he takes. He has aroused pro-Israelis against his Mideast diplomacy, and a melange of hawks and liberals against the dumping of Taiwan. Instead of building a head of steam for the SALT fight, the administration has slowed the bandwagon nearly down to a halt.

The administration's handling of the Iran crisis has not been notably reassuring. In early 1977, it appeared that Carter's human rights policy would give this country a little moral distance from the shah. But someone apparently showed the president a map demonstrating how strategically important Iran is to the West. And so the shah became Carter's "good friend." The president spent New Year's Eve of 1977 in Tehran and said: "Iran, because of the great leadership of the shah, is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world. This is a great tribute to you, Your Majesty, and to your leadership and to the respect and the admiration and love which your people give to you."

The president obviously was getting bad advice, and it has since become clear exactly how bad. Since the mid-1960s, when the shah was crushing his enemies with unrestrained police-state brutality, the United States government had been cut off from contact with any opposition groups in Iran. A deal cut with the shah provided that in return for the right to station electronic monitoring equipment along Iran's border with the Soviet Union, the United States would get its internal security information strictly from SAVAK, the shah's secret police. The US government was afraid to violate the agreement, fearing any attempt to infiltrate or contact opposition groups would be detected by SAVAK agents. It was only in late November of last year in the hour of the shah's greatest political crisis, that American diplomats and intelligence officials began talking to oppositionists. It was only on December 12 that the first contact took place between an American official—the State Department's Iran desk officer, Henry Precht—and a deputy of Ayatollah Khomeini, the rightist religious leader who has been causing most of the shah's trouble.

Apparently the White House actually has not sent any high level secret emissary to see Khomeini, even to find out what the old man may have in mind if and when his forces succeed in toppling the shah. The administration, with Zbigniew Brzezinski primarily in control of Iran policy, has been set on a course of total, unswerving support for the shah. "Unconditional and unexceptionable" was the way Brzezinski put it to one visitor. Any US contact with the Khomeini camp, the White House apparently feared, would be viewed in Iran as a shift of US support. When the president slipped, once, and indicated that the shah might not be able to hold onto power, special press briefings were called to "explain" the statement. The president not only declared at a hastily scheduled press conference that US support for the shah was solid, but went on to denounce Khomeini's "uncontrolled statements . . . that encourage bloodbaths and violence." In fact, Khomeini had just demonstrated during the Islamic holy days of Ashura that he was capable of ordering millions of people into the streets in peaceful protest.

The administration also fears that Saudi Arabia will change policies if the US does not back the shah to the hilt. In Zbigniew Brzezinski's conceptual framework, Saudi Arabia is one of the "newly influential" countries that will help rule the world in the coming era. (Israel, Brzezinski told James Reston, will be "the Switzerland or the Singapore" of the Middle East.) However, Saudi Arabia has been showing itself merely a frightened follower in the world, not a leader. It failed to help the US make Camp David a success, and apparently it did not fight at all in OPEC for a five percent oil price increase as it promised.

In a last, desperate gamble for survival, the shah has found an obscure oppositionist, Shahpur Bakhtiar, to head a new civilian government. The shah has hinted he might take a vacation in order to give the new government a chance to calm the country, but he has insisted on retaining his crown and his position as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. To some American observers, this looks to be a ploy, a set-up for a repeat of the shah's 1953 return to power with CIA assistance. The scenario would go as follows: the shah

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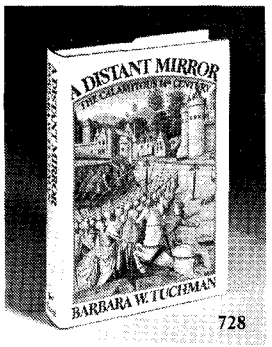

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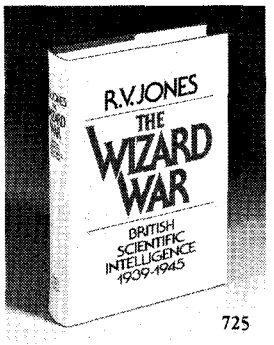

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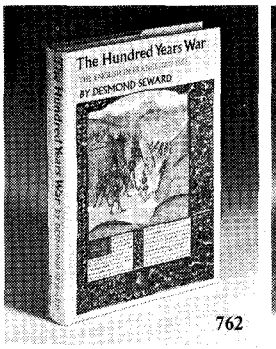

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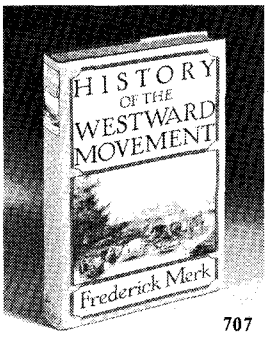

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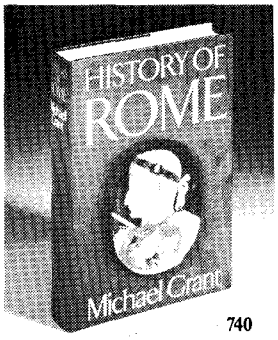

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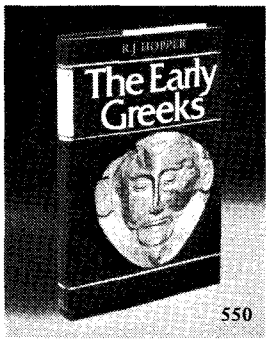

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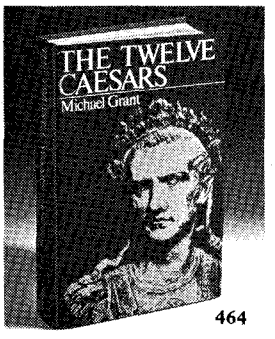

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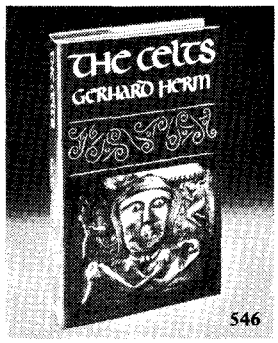

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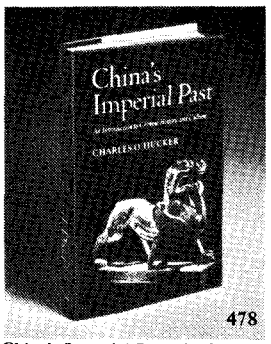

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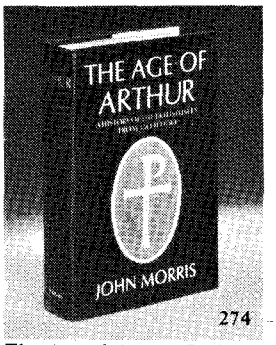

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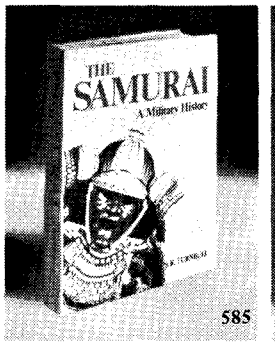

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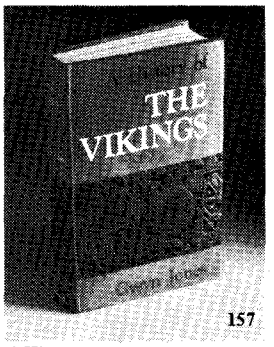

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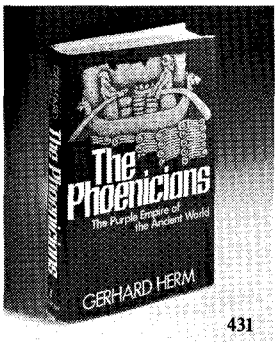

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leaves. Bakhtiar governs, with a regency council to plan elections. Khomeini is induced to return to Iran. Then the military, in a lightning coup, Chile style, decimates the government and the opposition, brutally repressing dissent and restoring the shah to power.

High officials of the Carter administration, while certainly not endorsing such a scenario, have indicated that military rule, even accompanied by massive repression, would not be the worst alternative for Iran. Having gone along with the shah so far, they may well be tempted, now, to support a military coup. If this is what the shah has in mind, and the US supports it, it might be taken as a masterstroke if it succeeded. But the chances are, it would bring on chaos in Iran, possibly civil war—with civilians fighting the military, and military elements fighting with each other—and would wreck whatever little respect the US enjoys in that country. It might also provide an excuse for Soviet intervention—overt or covert—in separatist-minded Iranian provinces.

The best course, all along, would have been for the United States to foster and support democracy in Iran. If it is good for us, why is it not good for the Persians? The Bakhtiar government has, in fact, promised elections and an end to martial law. It is said to be composed primarily of democratic elements. But for it to have any chance of winning sufficient support to govern, the shah would actually have to leave Iran, and give up control of the military. The United States should support this alternative, and use its influence with the military—which, after all, the US has equipped to the teeth—to respect and protect civilian rule and the democratic process. If Iran could emerge stable, peaceful and a democracy—well, *that* would be a tribute to US diplomacy. That would deserve "massive applause throughout the nation." So far, though, the Zbig and Jerry Show has been a flop. Jerry has given it the Full Rafshoon, but Zbig's contributions have been too cute by half.

Morton Kondracke

White House Watch

To the Peking Station

The main reason for the secrecy that cloaked President Carter's push for diplomatic recognition of the Communist Chinese government in Peking, de-recognition of the anti-Communist Chinese government on Taiwan, and termination of the mutual defense treaty with the Taiwan government, was clear to the very few American officials who knew what he was after and helped him get it in the last six months of 1978. He wanted what since 1972 had been called "normalization" of US and Chinese relationships to be perceived as *his* issue and the achievement of it to be recognized as his achievement. He wanted his spokesmen to be able to say, as one of his most senior assistants and spokesmen said at the White House after Carter announced his normalization agreement with the People's Republic of China on December 15, that "the entire process was directed personally by the President."

There were secondary reasons. The President wanted to surprise the world, and he did. His agreement with the Peking leadership on the terms of normalization was dicey, in danger of upset through misunderstanding, and settled beyond doubt and repudiation only in the last hours before it was announced in Washington and Peking. Premature disclosure that it was near would have aroused the friends and protectors of the Taiwan government in Congress, especially those who assumed that sudden action had been forestalled with House and Senate passage of an amendment requiring (they thought) consultation with Congress before the defense commitment was changed in any way. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke said afterward that total secrecy was "absolutely essential" to success of the negotiations between June and mid-December. Probably it was. It was certainly essential to Jimmy Carter and to the sense of pride and accomplishment that he derived from the result at the end of a year not largely enriched with proven accomplishment in foreign affairs.

The Carter phase of a process of accommodation with the PRC that had originated with Richard Nixon's and Henry Kissinger's visit to mainland China in 1972 began with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's visit to Peking in 1977. Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping said then that the Vance visit was a "disappointment." White House talkers associated with national security assistant Zbigniew Brzezinski escalated this remark into a finding that Vance's visit to Peking was a "disaster." It was said that Vance had failed to emphasize normalization, meaning recognition of the Peking government and de-recognition of the Taiwan government, as strongly as the Peking leaders had hoped. In the Brzezinski National Security Council zone at the White House, Peking's later indication that it would welcome a visit from another ranking US official was taken to mean, *let's get on with normalization*. The Carter response was stalled until the Panama Canal treaties ratification fight was over in early 1978. Vance was busy with strategic arms talks with the Soviet Union and with the Israel-Egypt negotiations. Only Brzezinski was available for Peking. And, glory be, Brzezinski went to

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Peking. His announced priorities of discussion were world affairs in general, two-country dealings between the US and the PRC short of formal diplomatic recognition, and assurance to Peking officialdom that Carter seriously wanted to get on with full normalization. The emphasis in news accounts (including mine) upon Brzezinski's blatant appeal to Chinese Communist fears of the Soviet Union may have been unfair to him. The fear and hostility existed. Kissinger and Richard Nixon said these factors had nothing to do with the approach in 1972, when in fact they did. Brzezinski said, the hostility exists so why deny that it does and why not acknowledge it as an element of US and PRC policy?

Three officials of the Carter administration exemplify the nuances and divisions of attitude toward Communist China, anti-Communist Taiwan and the Soviet Union that figured in and conditioned the drive toward China normalization. Holbrooke and Michel Oksenberg, a University of Michigan specialist in Asian affairs who had joined the Carter NSC staff, believed and argued that recognition of the PRC would be in itself a positive good, apart from any impact it might have upon US-Soviet relationships. Brzezinski agreed that US-PRC accommodation would be good in itself but he put more emphasis than Holbrooke and Oksenberg did upon the counterweight to Soviet influence in Asia and the world that US-PRC understanding could provide. The Oksenberg-Holbrooke view became influential toward the end of Carter's first year. Oksenberg and Holbrooke concluded together that 1977 had not been as good a year for the US in East Asia as it might have been and that an aggressive reach for accommodation with the PRC might make 1978 more productive. Carter, searching then as ever for any course that might distinguish his performance from the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger past, was aware of the view and responded to it.

After Brzezinski visited Peking last May, serious discussion of accommodation with and recognition of the PRC began. Mostly to minimize the possibility of news leaks in leaky Washington, Carter entrusted the detailed negotiations to Ambassador Leonard Woodcock, the former auto workers union head whom he had put in charge of the US liaison office in Peking.

Correction:

A typographical error appeared in "White House Watch," *TNR*, January 6, 1979. On page 10, column 1, the quotation by Richard Holbrooke, the State Department's assistant secretary for East Asian affairs, should have read in part: "The first answer to 'Why now?' is, basically, that we felt there would never have been a better time. . . . In Peking [we had] a leadership which was looking for a new outward thrust to the rest of the world. . . . On Taiwan we have a prosperous, stable, secure people on the crest of economic prosperity and success . . . under a strong and confident leadership. . . ."

Always under precise instruction from Carter, Brzezinski and Vance (or Holbrooke) in Washington, Woodcock dealt principally with PRC Foreign Minister Huang Hua. Luck intervened. Carter was often out of Washington, campaigning and then isolated at Camp David in Mideast negotiations, in August and September when the PRC's second ambassador in charge of its Washington liaison office, Chai Tse-min, arrived. By September 19, when Carter received Chai at the White House, Woodcock's negotiations in Peking had got to the point where Carter felt like declaring several key positions. He believed "normalization" was practicable, and wanted it soon. He was prepared to recognize Peking and withdraw recognition from Taiwan, but not to sever all relations with Taiwan. He insisted upon maintaining commercial relations including the sale of arms to Taiwan. He was prepared to terminate the mutual defense treaty with Taiwan upon a year's notice but not to abrogate it immediately.

Much misinformation about the September 19 meeting got out from a high-level, misinformed White House briefing. Carter did not then set January 1 as his target date for normalization. He did not then have Brzezinski cable Woodcock in Peking the gist of the positions the President had stated to Chai. All of that came later. Woodcock learned of Carter's detailed positions in a memorandum given him at the United Nations in New York and then during a talk with Carter in October. The January 1 target date was suggested by Carter and accepted by the PRC in an exchange of draft joint communiques extending from mid-October to early December. Only on December 13 was Carter convinced by messages from Peking that the PRC had accepted his basic terms—termination of the defense treaty at the end of 1979 rather than immediate abrogation, and continued relations including arms sales with Taiwan on a non-government basis. Only then did he decide to announce normalization on December 15. An oddity was that some of the Carter people encouraged the impression that normalization had been agreed entirely upon the PRC's terms, not partly upon Carter's terms. They figured for reasons hidden from me that this would make the whole business more acceptable.

The last hangup concerned arms sales to Taiwan. Again thanks to a high-level and somewhat confused White House briefer, it was misreported. Carter had insisted since June that he would never agree to normalization unless the PRC understood that the US remained free to sell defensive arms to the Taiwan government and to fulfill existing arms contracts that require delivery into 1983. The PRC agreed on two conditions—first, that it would never admit that it had agreed, and second that during calendar 1979 the US would make no further arms commitments to Taiwan. A staff review of the exchanges on this issue the night of December 14 indicated that the PRC might

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misunderstand that the US had committed itself to no new arms commitments *after* 1979. The PRC did not raise the question. Carter's people did. Brzezinski called Ambassador Chai to the White House early on the morning of December 15. Chai assured Brzezinski and PRC Premier Hua Kuo-feng confirmed at a press conference in Peking that there was no problem: the US and the PRC had agreed to disagree on the matter of continued arms sales to Taiwan.

John Osborne

A biologist's plea for science.

DNA Folly Continues

The so-called "greenhouse effect" has been getting some attention lately. The burning of oil, gas and coal by industrial societies around the world may be releasing too much CO2 and causing long-range increases in the temperature of our atmosphere. But there is no great push for regulation to prevent the atmospheric temperature from rising to unacceptable levels. Why not? For one thing, we do not know whether we are entering a warming or cooling period for the earth. We may want warmer weather to reduce our winter fuel needs. The point here is that if too many variables exist, prediction becomes impossible and we should back away from decisions that give the impression that we know more than we do. In particular we mustn't overreact by assuming the worst possible outcome and settling into a siege response that prevents the possibility of progress if in fact nothing catastrophic happens.

Ordinarily we don't overreact. But in the case of recombinant DNA research, we have. I believe we shall only harm ourselves by assuming that the newly developed recombinant DNA technology poses a credible threat to our civilization. The good that can come out of it is immense. It can revolutionize our understanding of human chromosomes, give us a practical way to make vaccines against difficult-to-grow viruses such as hepatitis, and yield unlimited amounts of now scarce drugs like the anti-viral agent interferon. Opposition to its use is based on the conjecture that these blessings might be mixed and that recombinant DNA procedures might also generate new disease agents or modify preexisting organisms so as to upset the earth's ecology.

Not even hints exist, however, that any of these dour events could result from totally unrestrained DNA research. Infectious disease experts tell us that pathogenicity is not easy to generate. The illegitimate interspecies DNA transfers that occur in nature have probably already tested the ecological consequence of any DNA transfer that we can now do in the laboratory. We should not get into a tizzy because we can't, now or even in the far distant future, absolutely disprove implausible hypotheses about how we may meet our doom. Instead we should push recombinant DNA research and development as fast as our resources permit, while keeping alert to the highly improbable event that one or more lab workers will come down with a disease that we have not seen before.

Unfortunately, we are not now acting with such bold intelligence. We are held back by a morass of bureaucratic regulations that are seen by most of the scientists they affect as having no intellectual validity. Alas, the origin of these increasingly despised rules was a small group of these same molecular biologists, chosen by the National Academy of Sciences in response to concerns that recombinant DNA might bring more harm than good. I was a member of this group.

In the spring of 1974 we called for a temporary moratorium on experiments involving either tumor virus genomes or the transfer from one group of bacteria to another of the genes coding for dangerous toxins. The moratorium was to last almost a year until the matter could be discussed by a larger international group of experts that was to meet at the Asilomar Conference Center in California. This moratorium was an apparently fair middle position that could satisfy both those many scientists who wanted to move swiftly and those who felt that if we were to err it should be on the side of caution.

This moratorium, done in haste after only half a day of meetings at MIT, was an act I now regret. The experiments we halted so casually soon struck me as much safer than many kinds of work with disease-causing agents that microbiologists have been carrying out for decades without significant harm to themselves, much less to the public at large. For example, experiments with tumor virus genes inserted into *E. coli* bacteria appear safer than working with the viruses themselves. Yet there are no firm regulations governing tumor virus research. The precautions to be taken are left for the individual researcher to decide. This does not reflect indifference to public health. Not knowing the level of risk, if any, it is impossible to know what precautions, if any, are necessary. Any rigid rules governing tumor virus research would appear capricious.

Why then did we react so much more cautiously to recombinant DNA? I suspect the main reason is that the recombinant DNA procedures were not yet a necessary ingredient of our day-to-day research. Until they became so, we did not wish to appear indifferent to the public good by unilaterally ignoring those who said that science was now out of public control. Moreover,

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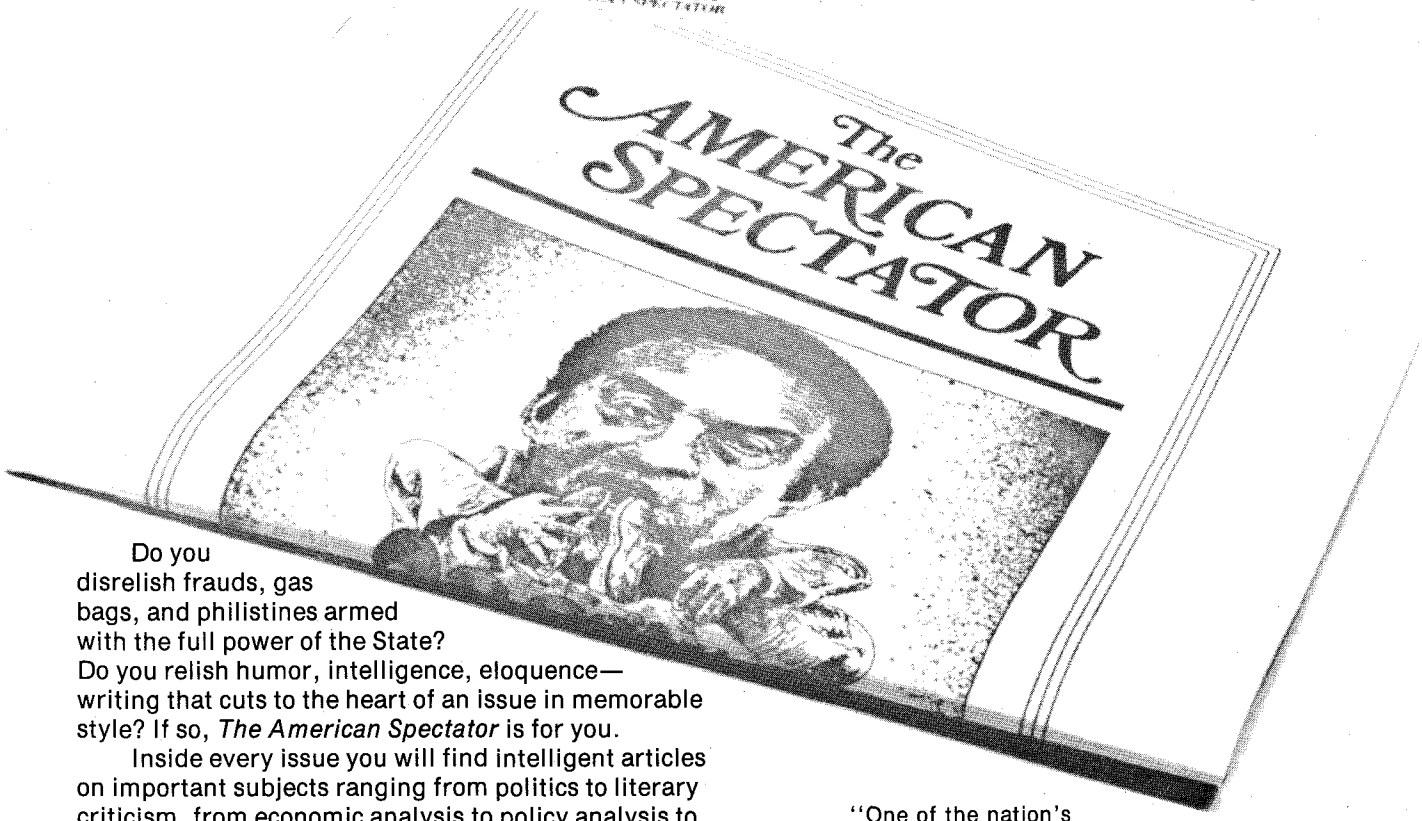

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Watergate was still with us and the national mood was very much to come clean with what we were up to. So we saw no harm and possibly some credit to be gained from attracting public attention. It was thought best to exaggerate our concerns. Later, we thought, when more experiments had been done and no one had taken ill because of recombinant DNA, we could seriously downplay or forget the whole matter. Meanwhile no one could accuse us of keeping back even our most paranoid ideas. It didn't occur to us that we might be alarming the public unnecessarily and giving recombinant DNA doomsday scenarios a credibility they didn't deserve.

We couldn't have been more naive. The minute the moratorium was announced, in effect we had invited the public to join us in the decision-making process. Why would we have actually halted our experiments if we weren't really worried?

The trap was thus almost closed when we assembled at Asilomar in February 1975. By then there had been so much talk to the press and TV about the wisdom of our initial caution that it was generally thought politically unacceptable to argue, as I did, that the whole conference was a mistake and we would do everyone a service by cutting it short with a brief statement that it is impossible to regulate conceptual risks. During the next two days there were only a few minor outcries that the logic behind the proposed rules was paper thin if not nonexistent. Virtually everyone joined to produce a set of internationally applicable rules to govern how everyone should subsequently work with recombinant DNA.

At first, the Asilomar solution pleased almost every participant. Most left for home happy that their own experiments might continue without too much hassle if the Asilomar recommendations were accepted by their respective governmental authorities. The general mood was that of relief.

Quickly, however, the uneasy truth began to emerge that Asilomar had been more of an emotional experience than a logical response to firm facts. With no real clues to the magnitude of the theoretical danger, there was no way to defend the Asilomar guidelines against either critics like me who saw no compelling reasons for any restrictions at all, or from the doomsday prophets who wanted all recombinant DNA work to stop.

With Senator Edward Kennedy adopting a populist cry that recombinant DNA was too important to be left in the scientists' hands, the process became hopelessly politicized. The National Institute of Health, deciding whether to adopt the Asilomar guidelines, felt obliged to include on its committee representatives from both the new left, which wanted to use recombinant DNA as a rallying cry for the downtrodden and to get back at MIT, Harvard and Berkeley; and from the Calvinistic hard core of the environmental movement, which believes that only tighter and tighter regulations can protect us from our baser motives of greed and ambition. The final guidelines that emerged from NIH in June 1976 restricted DNA work far more than those proposed at Asilomar.

But like any compromise between irreconcilable positions, the new guidelines satisfied no one. The environmentalists reacted with lawsuits based upon NIH's alleged failure to prepare adequate environmental impact statements. Science for the People cried that the guidelines could not be enforced and that the capitalistic imperative for profits would deluge us with newly created deadly germs.

Equally angry were more and more molecular biologists who could not start their experiments until the so-called "safe strains" were certified—a process none of them felt was needed at all. While waiting, they could only curse themselves for acquiescing so witlessly in the Asilomar charade. But for strategic reasons, most molecular biologists felt the best course was to argue in public that the Asilomar guidelines were the correct response and that if we were to follow them we would have nothing to worry about. This tactic frequently created more anxiety than it dispersed, because it implied that we knew what we were protecting ourselves against. If so, the dangers society faced were real and there was cause to worry what would happen if the NIH guidelines were not strictly adhered to. Inevitably there was more and more talk about the need for punitive national legislation. Drafts of proposed laws began to circulate in Congress in 1977.

Happily, Congress got tangled up in trying to decide which form of legislation was needed—in particular whether it should preempt state and local governments from passing even tougher rules. This gave us hope that if we lobbied hard enough, the absurdity of recombinant DNA regulation would become clear and the guidelines would gradually fade away before anyone codified them into real law. In fact this has partly happened, though not as fast as it would have if all scientists had said in public what we were endlessly boring ourselves with in private. In any case, the about-face last spring by the politically astute Senator Kennedy almost certainly signifies that recombinant DNA no longer has any political value.

Our main concern now is how quickly NIH can rid itself of its regulatory role over DNA research. To do certain experiments now, we must go to England or France where the rules are not nearly as dogmatic as ours. Last June a somewhat emboldened Recombinant Advisory Committee gave its consent to the desired relaxations of NIH guidelines. But this achievement was far from painless, because of the absurdly lengthy procedural details that must be followed to give due process to those who disapproved any downgrading. By late September, though, we thought we were home at last. The only remaining step was approval by HEW Secretary Joseph Califano.

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Instead the secretary's staff strongly objected to the proposal by NIH that its Recombinant Advisory Committee be dominated by leading scientists who wanted to work with recombinant DNA. They wanted a "balanced" committee that would represent all sides of the matter. This proposal naturally depresses us, since it opens up the prospects of people with no scientific qualifications deciding what scientific work we should not do. Naturally we have called on everyone we know in the White House to alert them to this new folly within HEW. We are told, however, that we shouldn't worry, as in fact the secretary has approved the proposed guideline relaxations. Moreover, they say, only a few of the public representatives will be real obstructionists, and we can count on the rest to help us quietly dismantle the whole hateful artifice. Why the White House finds it necessary to put any obstructionists on board is beyond me. I doubt that President Carter would lose more than 500 votes in the entire country if he announced that we can do anything we want with recombinant DNA.

We must not fight back, however, by saying (as Maxine Singer did in a recent issue of *Science*) that only we scientists can judge unquantifiable conceptual risks. We are as unqualified as everyone else to assess such situations and we are stewing in this mess because we said otherwise. If there were firm facts showing that recombinant DNA was leading to dangerous new bugs, then it would be proper for the public to help us decide what we should do next. But since no evidence exists to let us decide rationally whether we or the public should worry at all, no Recombinant Advisory Committee should exist.

This point, not whether there should be public members, is the crux of the matter. We are upset by the thought of too many public members only because they may take regulation seriously, unlike the molecular biologists. We must call out as loudly as we can for the freedom to do all forms of recombinant DNA research. To act otherwise is against all the traditions that have given us modern science.

Secretary Califano is now proposing that no further guideline downgrading occur unless we start serious experiments to show we shall not be put in danger from our newly created bugs. This is effectively an impossible demand, for some incalculable risks go along with almost all major medical or technological steps. This fact of life cannot be avoided by the setting aside of large sums of money for "risk assessments" that necessarily have no generalized applicability. Given the almost infinite variety of potential recombinant DNA experiments, there is no way such risk assessment could ever be done on a massive enough scale to completely reassure anyone with a real brain.

Scientists must make as widely known as possible our lack of confidence in Secretary Califano's office, and the probability that its misguided egalitarianism will deprive this nation of the full benefits of the most powerful new research tool available for biological research.

James D. Watson

James D. Watson is winner of the Nobel Prize for biology and author of *The Double Helix*.

The 1970s, continued.

No Survivors

At the beginning of the 1970s, Melvyn Lasky, the editor of *Encounter*, visited me in Washington and, as we had a drink before going to lunch, he said urgently to me: "There have to be survivors. There have to be some who survive a time like this. It is the survivors who will matter." He already had said, "One needs a gas mask to go into an American bookstore now," and I agreed with him. I think that both he and I were so sure that there always are survivors—those who have kept their heads and their nerves in a time of madness—that we may have been whistling to keep our courage up. My own attempt to find a label for the 1970s would be that it is a Decade of No Survivors.

There are individuals who have survived. Having kept their integrity in the 1960s, they still have it to use. Some of their pupils and successors are also survivors. But it is clear at the end of the 1970s that there has been no collective survival. There is no institution—political, social, cultural or academic—that is not still scarred by the 1960s. There has been no recovery. The presidency has not recovered. Congress has not recovered. The universities have not recovered. The press has not recovered. Art and literature, in their narrowest and broadest senses, have not recovered.

This again is something that our new conservatives might ponder in their baths, although if they looked honestly they might open their arteries. If this is the decade over which they are presiding so unexpectedly but so chirpily, then let them face the fact that it is a time whose achievement is abysmal and whose promise is bleak. There has been precious little survival or recovery of what presumably they wish to conserve. And there has been not the slightest sense of any new endeavor or commitment. They as much as anyone else are scavengers and vultures among the refuse of the 1960s, feeding off its hatreds and still addressing its problems.

This should not surprise us. The tone of the 1970s was set by the man—who would stand out as a peculiarly nasty man in the political history of any

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country—who was elected to be president in 1968. He was elected primarily as a result of the defection of the antiwar liberals, those who said that there was no difference between Nixon and Humphrey. This magazine at the time, with its infamous editorial "Choose If You Can," was not the least of offenders. It is not too much to say that by this attitude the liberals threw away the 1970s, found themselves landed with all that was most fatuous in the 1960s in the person of George McGovern, and then were open to a takeover by the most unlikely of candidates in 1976. But the tone was set by Nixon for the country as a whole. As peculiarly nasty as ever, but also the emblem of all the nastiness of the 1960s, he controlled the 1972 election. The creep did not even need CREEP to win. But he needed CREEP to avenge the injuries of the 1960s, which associates such as John Mitchell seemed to have taken personally. The rage of the 1960s still ran in Nixon's veins. Did he not open the 1970s by saying that the students were bums? His enemies list was no more than the malice of the 1960s raised to the caricature of a state document.

The American press was happy to stay in the 1960s. It had guilt to expiate. Having helped to crucify Humphrey, it raised the preposterous image of the "new Nixon." Even as the evidence accumulated during the 1972 campaign that he was very much the "old Nixon," it hung back like poltroon courtiers, and smilingly scoffed at the wholly accurate charges McGovern was making in speech after speech. As the Watergate story and the cover-up unfolded, the press had three reasons for feeling guilt and shame. It had been taken in by John Kennedy. It had been taken in until very late by the official justifications of the war in Vietnam. Now it had been taken in by the "new Nixon," no less than its own creation. There was only one thing for the press to do, to become (like any reformed courtier bent double with so much stooping) a humbug. It would proclaim itself the righteous guardian of the nation's moral sense.

Like everyone else, the press was scarred by the 1960s, even halfway into the 1970s. But most scarred of all were the conservatives, even when their opportunity had come at last. They showed not the slightest interest in restoring, to say nothing of reimagining, the culture and society that had been so damaged, as long as they could take revenge, under any banner, such as law'n'order. The first half of the 1970s was spent in hounding down the riff-raff of what was left of the 1960s. Never have conservatives been so unpoised in the face of so motley a rabble. The supporters of McGovern in 1972 may have had reason to be bitter about his fatuities, but one would have expected his opponents to sit back and polish their nails. Instead they waxed indignant as if he were a threat, and the only possible explanation is that they were still fighting the battles of the 1960s. The America of 1974, when Nixon resigned, was very much the America of 1968, when he was first elected. That is the true measure of the conservatives' achievement. In eight years of husbandry, they had not essentially changed the landscape.

The 1970s cannot be called the Decade of Watergate; Watergate was the late fizzling of the 1960s. It was not the constitutional crisis that we are still encouraged to believe it was. It was a rather ordinary, even if melodramatic, political crisis in which, sooner or later, the leaders of a political party, some more reluctantly than others, had to get rid of their party's chief. The pressures that mounted on these leaders make a fine political tale, but to think that Watergate was in any way a crucial or defining event of the 1970s, one by which we can label the decade and pinpoint its essence, is to dwell at the point where the 1960s at last stopped. Unfortunately this is where many commentators still are.

A Decade of No Survivors. And that means no survivors in art and literature any more than in any other activity. All that needs to be said of the art of the 1970s was said last week: it has at best reduced itself to a mere painterliness. But this painterliness has its parallel in our literature, with its no less exquisite daintiness about itself. As the great poets went down one by one, Auden and Berryman and Lowell, each in his own way and all too early, no more than reedy flutings fill the silence. Oh! there are marvelous little gems of poems, which we pet and pat for standing on two legs at all, but there are always marvelous little gems of poems to be had. What is missing is the whole body of any poet's work that takes us by the scruff of our necks, that stands morally (what an idea!) in our paths. It is inconceivable that any poet now writing could ever produce as sustained and gritty a long poem as Berryman's "Homage to Mistress Bradstreet." Our fiction is no better, as the novelists first of the 1950s, and then of the 1960s, drift further into silence and evasions, and none takes their place, on whom we can sharpen our teeth. There are individual exercises in deftness; there is no growing *oeuvre* of a master. Even the favorites of the *cognoscenti*, Nabokov or Borges, who in the 1970s have stood on their pinnacles, are praised for writing about language, much as art is praised for being about art. We are entranced on the stage by productions as featherweight as those of Neil Simon. We dart from frivolous movie to frivolous movie, and exclaim at their mere virtuosity. No previous decade in this century has been so barren of anything in art and in literature to which one might think of attaching the label of greatness.

This should worry us, not least (again) the conservatives. Conservative decades in the past usually—say, the 1920s or the 1950s—have been notably fertile and even innovative in the arts. This is not surprising. One would expect art and literature to take up their stance athwart a time of acquiescence and somnolence. Art and literature, to say the least, and in a way to say the

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most, cannot stand to be bored, or especially to be boring. Yet the little entertainments by which we are now amused are in fact as boring as we are bored, which is why we flit from one to the next, like moths to candles. In 1969 we were advised that Truman Capote was in Miami, working on a new book to be called *Answered Prayers*. Ten years later those who prayed for the book have been answered only with a dishevelled token of it in a magazine. However much pathos the better sides of us may find in the ever tightening circles of silence to which Capote has been reduced in this decade, our more stringent sides must still ask why he and so many other of the promising young stars of the 1950s—a Malamud, for example—and then of the 1960s have been reduced to paralysis in their writing, at the very time when they should have been reaching their maturity. In American letters, perhaps more than in any other field, there are few survivors.

This barrenness is so unusual that it should alert us. There must be something deeply at fault in a society that in an entire decade can point only to a culture that is almost a desert. Our new conservatives, as the assumed and self-assuming guardians of the culture, should be most troubled of all. There must be a cause beyond the terrible destructiveness of the 1960s, with their false gestures and deluded commitments, and above all their draining demands on people's integrity. And of course there was a cause beyond them because, as I said last week, the 1960s were merely the street theater of the high culture, where it already had travelled. "The 1960s' most overused material," said an art critic early in the 1970s, "may have been the audience." There it is in a nutshell, all that one had objected to in the 1960s, in the glib notions of "participation," whether in politics or in the arts. For when the audience is so overused, there is really no audience at all.

There is only a surrender, by those who should be addressing an audience, to a collection of unassociated selves, who have none of the qualities of an audience. The politician or artist or writer becomes only the Lord of the Revels. In its most banal but also most destructive form, there was the academic surrender to student violence, as when Professor Douglas Dowd of Cornell, a co-chairman of the New Mobilization Committee in 1970, said ecstatically of the violent students, "God bless them. I will not join them, but God bless them." But the surrender took place all through society and the culture, as the apparently most intelligent of men and women, if hardly the most responsible, searched to bestow some legitimacy on what was pop, on the worst of rock and the silliest of movies. The 1970s have not recovered from this. One more label that I would pin on them is that they are a Decade with No Audience. No audience for the politician or the artist or the writer. What has broken down a writer such as Mailer, for example, is the discovery that, in the mutual self-celebration of equal participators, there was, in the end, no audience at all.

One of the Yippie pamphlets of the early 1970s urged, "Break down the family, church, nation, city, economy," all of them the areas where real audiences may be found, "turn life into an art form and theater of the soul. . . . Burn down your houses"—again where an audience may be found—"and you will be free." All of which, according to that consummate ass, Tom Hayden, were "beautiful sentiments." But there were asses elsewhere, in positions more august, and this is what the 1970s have exposed. For who jumped most eagerly onto the bandwagon, spreading daisies in the paths of the free-tripping souls? Who was most grateful to see the audience broken down into irresponsible selves, the more easy to cajole and seduce, in order to make multi-billion-dollar industries out of their giddiness? Who but the corporations? Who but the capitalists? Talking of the work ethic out of one corner of their mouths, they have huckstered the drugs of anesthesia from the other.

Take any example one likes from any field, but I will take one with a personal memory. When I first went to see *The Graduate*, I walked out after 15 minutes, taking my protesting friend with me. "The film is going to be rubbish." Persuaded to go a second time, and sit through the movie, I obediently if restlessly did so, and at the end my friend agreed with me, "The film was rubbish." Asked later by an American sociologist how I judged that it would be rubbish so quickly—which nowadays is a more or less general opinion—I said that there was no possibility from the first 15 minutes that any character would be developed with any integrity. But the success of *The Graduate* had a dramatic effect on the movie industry. Here was a whole new undemanding and gullible non-audience, which would lap up anything if it did not tax their minds or emotions too much. Not long afterward came *2001*, which at first was something of a flop, until the industry decided to sell it as a trip. From then on this huge non-audience has been manipulated to take any piece of nonsense as a trip. In the absence of an audience, the little selves gobble it all up, because they have been gobbled.

Destroy the audience. Destroy it by distracting it. Distract it with stunts. Perform the stunts abroad. No decade has been so *unnecessarily* obsessed with foreign affairs than the 1970s. There has been a massive collusion to entertain the people with alarums and excursions, so that their eyes will not be fixed too long on the poverty of their individual lives. Walter Cronkite stands on the Great Wall of China before Richard Nixon has reached it. We are persuaded that Barbara Walters is the mediator in a conflict of not only the centuries but the ages. There can be no audience for such occasions, as the viewers sit stupefied in front of their television sets, bombarded by names that have no meaning for them. They could be an audience only if those communities still existed—including the political

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parties and the unions—which interests and forces more powerful than the Yippies are bent on breaking down. This is what the conservative 1970s have not faced: not only is there little possibility of an audience for any voice of authority, but this is precisely what Mobil Oil and its imitators want.

For let us not disregard the Mobil Oil advertisements on the Op-Ed pages of our newspapers as merely a clever piece of public relations work. What the chiefs of Mobil Oil saw was that a society had arrived in which they could reach beyond the parties or the unions, even the churches or the family, wherever the opinion of an audience used to be formed and then sustained, to each little pocket of a self, isolated and self-certain, self-certain because self-proud, self-proud because made so by the strongest manipulative private interest that any society has ever known. We are wrong to ask why the participation in American politics is so low. It has perhaps never been higher, in tiny pockets of self-interest, where no wider concern has to be regularly consulted. The people today are almost furiously participant, with their little lobbies and mesmerizing propositions. But they are participants exactly as in the 1960s they were invited to become equal participants in works of art and literature, the audience demolished into wispy expressions of immediately felt appetites and "unobstructed needs." The absence of an audience means the absence of a nation. The Decade with No Audience has treacherously but inevitably, by the end of the 1970s, turned into the Decade of No Nation. It is this that the world asks: where and what is America now? The 1970s have given no answer.

Henry Fairlie

If Washington's work gets done at parties, this says more about the work than about the parties.

Marie Antoinette's Guide to Washington

by Art Levine

They tell a famous story about Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. It seems that one day Fitzgerald said to Hemingway, "You know, Ernest, the rich are very different from you and me." "Yes," Hemingway is said to have responded, "but in Washington it's hard to tell."

The crucial distinction between the rich and the rest of us gets blurred in Washington for two reasons. First, the rich here—even more than elsewhere—try desperately to mask their idleness in high social purpose. Second, the general affluence and the widespread traditions of expense account, political and diplomatic entertaining make it possible for many non-rich to spend a good part of the day living in a manner indistinguishable from the lifestyle of their economic betters.

The important subject of Washington social life has now been given book-length treatment by Lucy Moorehead, the wife of Democratic Representative William Moorehead. "The Mooreheads shuttle from their house in Georgetown to Pittsburgh to their farm in the Virginia countryside with side trips to London, Paris, Martha's Vineyard and Vail, Colorado," according to the author's blurb of *Entertaining in Washington* (Putnam's). As you might guess from that list, Mr. Moorehead represents a district in Pittsburgh. The other destinations must be for constituent services.

Mrs. Moorehead, a Washington hostess for 20 years, takes us on chats with her socialite friends and tells us their tips, and hers, on entertaining. Among other notables, we meet Katherine Graham, Pamela Harriman, Susan Mary Alsop and Elizabeth Taylor. Mrs. Moorehead also looks at official White House and diplomatic entertaining.

One of the justifications for the book—and for the parties themselves—is that entertaining in Washington has a more serious purpose than partying elsewhere. At first glance, some readers might think that Mrs. Moorehead and her friends are inane, self-absorbed snobs, lavishing thousands of dollars on ostentatious parties and dances. But Arthur Schlesinger Jr., in his introduction to the book, saves us from such an error.

Art Levine is a contributing editor of *The Washington Monthly.*

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"Do not be deceived by appearances," he warns. "This is the war-gaming of occasions where the sternest purpose lurks under the highest frivolity." The Pulitzer Prize historian also explains, "As every close student of Washington knows, half the essential business of government is still transacted in the evening." Mrs. Moorehead's book is an earnest, but hilariously wrong-headed effort to perpetuate these and other illusions about Washington life. The real truth is that if so much business is indeed transacted at night, it doesn't mean that the parties are so important. Rather, it shows just how trivial the work really is.

Mrs. Moorehead makes only one serious attempt to illustrate the political importance of Washington parties. In a chapter called "The Washington Difference," she shows how one of her parties ended the Vietnam War.

One evening in March 1968, she threw a party that was attended by some congressmen, a *New York Times* reporter and the wife of a high Pentagon official, among others. The world would never be the same afterward. As Mrs. Moorehead explains, "Sometimes an exchange at a party can change the course of events." It seems that during the course of dinner, one of the congressmen learned from the Pentagon official's wife that her husband was unhappy with the country's policy in Vietnam. The congressman told the *Times* reporter, who followed up on this explosive tip by attempting to find out how many more troops General Westmoreland wanted from President Johnson.

From her escargot's-eye view of history, the key events followed inexorably. The *Times* broke the story on Westmoreland's troop requests, her husband introduced an anti-war resolution, Eugene McCarthy triumphed in New Hampshire, Bobby Kennedy announced his candidacy and President Johnson announced he wouldn't seek a second term. And in only five years, it was all over! "But the real change in public opinion came about because of the *Times* story which started on the hunch of a congressman and his reporter friend, both of whom happened to be at the same dinner party with a very downhearted wife."

Mrs. Moorehead has written a valuable book, but not in the way she intended. Marxists will find it a compelling argument for an immediate takeover of the government. As a how-to guide on entertaining, it is practically worthless. State lottery winners might find it useful in throwing their first big bash. But most millionaires and diplomats presumably already know how to celebrate in the high style recommended by Mrs. Moorehead. Less fortunate readers can hardly afford the time, money or domestic help needed to follow her suggestions. *The Washington Post*'s reviewer felt otherwise. "Unexpectedly exciting and useful tips on food, wine and jollying the guests tumble from the mouths of the usually more restrained and secretive upper-crusts," reviewer Coates Redmon, former speechwriter to Rosalynn Carter, wrote of Mrs.

The Bettmann Archive

"Unexpectedly exciting tips on jollying the guests. . . ."—*The Washington Post*

Moorehead's probing interview technique. "And she herself tells us much that is valuable about party logistics." Perhaps the reviewer was thinking of Polly (Mrs. Clayton) Fritchey's exciting suggestion that chicken salad is nice in hot weather. This is the kind of advice we can all profit from, although the tip is not so useful as to include a recipe.

Mrs. Moorehead's basic *persona* in the book is that of an all-thumbs, nervous hostess. Readers are meant to empathize with her social crises. She first creates this role in an anecdote about a party she helped plan when she was 15. Forty prep-schoolers are invited to dinner by her mother and, to Lucy's horror, "All of us, including Mother, had overlooked the matter of where the guests were to go before the dinner began. The library was clearly much too small. . . . Maids were waiting expectantly to be told where to serve the Coca-Cola and tomato juice." Tension mounts as we wonder whether little Lucy will be able to get herself out of this fix. Will the guests be able to fit into the library? Will the party be a success? The suspense may be unbearable for some readers.

Eventually, Lucy marries and moves to Washington. At first she is so anxious that she studies Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent* as a guide to her new world. She makes errors here, too, but now she shares her hard-won experience. For example, her chapter on dinner dances is filled with valuable hints. "If you plan on live music, get the best, like Michael Carney or Peter Duchin, top orchestra leaders who play all over the country," she advises. "Don't get a second-rate group because you'll save a hundred dollars [because] you can't do anything if your orchestra comes in, sets itself up and instead of a lifting sweep of sound produces a somnambulant beat." In Mrs. Moorehead's own spirit of practical advice to Washington readers, I have filled an odd gap in her narrative by finding out what an evening of Peter Duchin costs: $6500. (This is $2500 less than the

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median family income in Mr. Moorehead's district.)

But like other housewives, Mrs. Moorehead looks for ways to save money. She remembers the cost-cutting tips she learned from a dance she gave with Mary Bundy, wife of McGeorge Bundy. After laying out the money for the orchestra, staff and caterer, "Mary and I were determined not to let expenses get out of hand." So the enterprising pair borrow silverware and other items from friends. Soon she learned it's not so expensive to *rent* those items from your caterer.

Mrs. Moorehead also stresses throughout the book the importance of keeping an eye on your help. Her tone veers wildly between wariness and condescension as she describes the domestic help who actually keep all these parties going. It's at these moments that Mrs. Moorehead truly begins to resemble the Margaret Dumont character in the Marx Brothers movies. We don't have Groucho leering at Mrs. Moorehead, or Harpo cutting off her husband's tie with a pair of oversized scissors. But Mrs. Moorehead portrays herself as continually victimized by incompetent cooks, lazy musicians and dishonest servants. Count your liquor supply carefully, she says, or the staff may "tuck something under the old arm as they trot out the door at the end of the party." On the other hand, she recalls fondly how Susan Mary Alsop's French maid sewed up Ethel Kennedy's dress at a Moorehead dance: "Her evening was made when she sewed Ethel back together." And she strews little valentines to folks like "Alginor Jackson, the world's greatest handyman and jack-of-all-trades, and his nephew, who moved everything out of the living room, where the dance was to be held." Katherine Graham's housekeeper is a "cheerful black woman"; Pamela Harriman's butler is "a genial man." No tucking and trotting among these fine people, we must assume.

Mrs. Moorehead doesn't limit her advice to swank dances. As she told me, "I wanted to cover as broad an economic spectrum as was reasonable to include." To this end, she interviews a typical bachelor, Michael Edwards. "Michael's way of life corresponds to that of any man or woman (or couple) with a full-time job, who doesn't have time to work all day on a party yet enjoys entertaining," she assures us. Michael is just an average working stiff, running an international shipping firm, speaking four languages, owning apartments in London and Paris and a house in Provence. Michael tells Lucy's younger readers what cooking instructions to leave the maid when you leave for work in the morning.

I asked Mrs. Moorehead if she intended her book as a guide for rich people. She said, "Oh, Lord, no! That was the last thing in the world I wanted."

Entertaining in Washington has been well received. It was reviewed on the front page of *The Washington Post*'s Style section. The review was meant to be "sarcastic but fair," author Coates Redmon insists, so perhaps it was only the extreme subtlety of the humor that made it read almost like a rave. The *Post* also ran a long excerpt from the book in its Sunday magazine, with Mrs. Moorehead's photograph on the cover. Her publication party in Washington received ample society page coverage. Besides Arthur Schlesinger Jr., other intellectuals who have praised the book include Diana Vreeland ("absolutely delicious"), Lynda Johnson Robb ("Fascinating!"), Peter Duchin ("Indispensable"), and Representative James Symington ("This happy and useful book").

This reaction shows what a small town Washington really is. An equivalent book about New York would be ripped apart savagely by the *Times* and other publications—or ignored. But here she is hailed in the media and a protective cloak is thrown around her.

Privately, I'm told, the response of Washington's elite has been a social disaster for Mrs. Moorehead. "They're all saying Lucy's such a ninny," one socialite says.

It turns out that Lucy Moorehead has committed a terrible social gaffe by destroying the illusion that she and her friends are serious people, engaged in meaningful work. Her credentials have thus been tarnished. In Washington, real status goes only to those who appear to be doing important work. The message our socialites send out to the rest of the country is that no idle rich live here. Mrs. Moorehead, in her attempt to demonstrate her own seriousness, has shown how frivolous she really is. And in doing so, she has brought her friends down with her. Mrs. Moorehead transforms her friends into lifeless mannequins, chattering about their dinners and their servants, so they seem to have little of the wit and charm she attributes to them. Several of her subjects were understandably reluctant to be interviewed for this book. They do not wish to be known primarily as party-givers. That would make them appear frivolous. No one is supposed to admit that these Washington parties are enjoyable; they are a tedious duty, engaged in only for the good of the nation. But once Mrs. Moorehead got them going, some of her friends apparently couldn't stop themselves. Anyone talking at length about parties begins to sound a bit vapid, and these people are no exception.

What Lucy Moorehead worms out of Washington's "secretive upper crust" (to quote the *Post* review again) is how obsessed they really are with food and entertaining. Some of that may be due to the fundamentally unchanged lives of most of the women in the book. Living stereotypes, they are indeed prisoners of gilded cages, accessories to their husbands' careers. But the men in the book—such as Joseph Alsop and Ardeshir Zahedi, as of this writing still the Iranian ambassador—share much the same loving attention to details.

There's a real intelligence involved in their entertaining, a sense of planning and care, that seems to be absent from so much of the work that these people do. The programs and policies they influence would benefit

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from the kind of hard work they devote to a dinner dance. In a city where real achievement is very hard to measure, social status plays a much larger role in estimations of self-worth. And parties are occasions where self-worth can be measured and displayed.

Perhaps Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s dictum should be revised. It is not that half the essential business of government is transacted at parties. It is that the essential business of government *is* parties, at least as it is practiced by many people in Washington.

Grey Eminences, IX.

The Grand Designer

by Donald R. Katz

The brief resurrection of George Ball recently to study the Iran crisis for the Carter administration reached its apogee when his photograph appeared on the front page of *The Washington Post* for the first time in years. More than most diplomats, George Ball always loved that sort of thing. But the publicity probably provided little more than bittersweet nostalgia. At 69, Ball must know that he'll never shake his image as LBJ's domesticated dove and thus his relegation to a role as chief retired symbol of gentlemanly internal dissent. Symbols of independent thought make fine temporary appointments in a symbol-crazed administration, but they rarely get to be secretary of state, the job that George Ball always believed should be his. It's a job he never got in his pre-symbol days because of the rotten luck of being owed the job only by electoral losers.

After so many years at the pinnacle of the foreign policy establishment, it's odd for George Ball to be characterized as an iconoclast and a maverick. He is really a man of ideological structure. George Wildman Ball carries enough grand designs in his head to fill several file cabinets. Some of them are for himself, of course, but the most are for the rest of the world—at least for its more serious and civilized parts. He was a trilateralist before they invented the word. Some of the more grandiose failures of American policy since World War II have been helped by George Ball's pious belief that new superpowers, alliances, and integrations of national systems—empires, according to critics—can be drafted by men like him in offices in Paris and Washington. Coming out of it all as the least sullied member of the best and the brightest is just a lucky break. It was never part of his meticulous plans.

Donald R. Katz is a New York writer.

Ball absorbed an interest in foreign affairs at Northwestern University law school, where he followed in the footsteps of Adlai Stevenson (later his law partner in Chicago) and Arthur Goldberg. While in Chicago, he became active in the high-minded Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. His first experience in foreign policy in Washington was helping to administer lend-lease in 1942. After the war, he was a member of the law firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Friendly and Ball, bringing it many European clients.

Nineteen sixty-two was almost George Ball's big year. In 1962 Ball almost accomplished something he'd meant to do for years—reorganize the industrialized world. He had spent 1961 consolidating his base inside the State Department after landing the number-three spot as under secretary of state for economic affairs at the beginning of the Kennedy administration. He had proven himself the strongest personality in the State Department by late 1961, despite all the "hard-headed" New Frontiersmen eager to meet problems "head-on" who surrounded him. Ball was in charge of Kennedy's plans to liberalize US trade policy toward Europe. This was step one of a foreign policy occasionally called "the Ball plan." George Ball was much more than a free trader. In 1962 he was recognized as a devout Europeanist. He believed and still believes in the economic, social and political integration of the European continent. Ball had worked toward this goal since the war. He had helped draft the European Coal and Steel Community treaty and had been legal counselor to Jean Monnet, the "father of Europe," whom Ball called "the keeper of the conscience of a continent."

Ball dreamed of a new united Europe made worthy of joining the United States in grand partnership. Ball and

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CITIVIEWS

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Financial Competition

The American economic system is based on the premise that the public benefits from free competition and suffers from its absence. That is why we have antitrust laws. As the Supreme Court has said:

The Sherman Act was designed to be a comprehensive charter of economic liberty aimed at preserving free and unfettered competition as a rule of trade. It rests on the premise that the unrestrained interaction of competitive forces will yield the best allocation of our economic resources, the lowest prices, the highest quality and the greatest material progress, while at the same time providing an environment conducive to the preservation of our democratic political and social institutions.

The principle and the commitment seem clear. Equally clear, however, is the fact that scarcely a vestige of either the principle itself or the government's commitment is to be found at work in today's financial marketplace. On the contrary, if our entire regulatory structure had been designed for the sole purpose of suppressing competition, it could hardly have been more successful.

This is especially true of the preponderance of present laws and regulations concerning financial transactions.

Competition does, in fact, occur in the financial marketplace, but its extent and intensity are inversely proportional to the amount of government intervention; that is to say, those parts of the marketplace where the government's hand appears most often are precisely the areas in which we find the least competition.

Banking regulations have been based historically on the premise that protecting the depositor's money requires—and justifies—shielding the bank from too much competition, and that in return for charters granting them a near-monopoly on money and credit, banks might reasonably be required to forego many commercial activities. It is now clear, however, that no such monopoly exists—if indeed, it ever did—and that regulations designed to shelter individual institutions have the long-range effect of handicapping the entire industry. Financial markets have been invaded in a major way by competitors from many other sectors of the economy. (Like most other developments in the present era, this invasion is occurring with unprecedented velocity.)

Commercial banking's share of the financial assets owned by financial institutions in the United States has dwindled from more than 57% in 1946 to less than 40% today. This is only part of the story, however, since it represents only changes in the market share within the traditional financial services industry. Equally significant are the activities of enterprises operating in the financial marketplace from bases entirely outside the financial industry.

Companies whose primary business lies outside the financial marketplace are able to generate assets and organizations in relatively unregulated environments. These assets and organizational abilities can then be brought into the financial marketplace, where they are used with growing success to compete against institutions like commercial banks, which are legally barred from engaging in any other "non-bank-related" activity. This is a one-sided contest that can only produce a steady erosion of the entire banking industry.

In early 1978, for example, two of the largest chains of retail stores in the United States had installment accounts receivable equal to more than one-twelfth of the total

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consumer installment loans of all American banks combined. Five companies alone accounted for more than one-tenth of all consumer installment credit in the country.

Several such companies have established strong positions in the insurance industry. Altogether, the finance-related profits accruing to these "nonfinancial" companies are large. None of America's more than 14,000 commercial banks, for example, equaled the 1977 *financial* earnings of the largest chain of retail stores; only three equaled or surpassed General Motors Acceptance Corp., and only eight rivaled Ford Credit Corp.

While the banks—and, indeed, all the traditional depository institutions—face mounting competition in the financial market from nonfinancial companies, they are also confronted with the fact that many companies are now bypassing the traditional market altogether. One of the most significant trends of the past 10 years has been the tendency of nonfinancial companies to bypass the banking system by writing IOUs to one another in the form of commercial paper. Since 1965, when short-term lending by one corporation to another was less than $1 billion, this business has soared to between $10 billion and $12 billion today, cutting out the banks along the way. When commercial paper held by such entities as insurance companies, money-market funds and foreign investors is included, the total rises to about $16 billion.

There is a certain irony in the fact that the traditional symbol of world capitalism, the commercial bank, in the United States has become one of the institutions least able to respond to a competitive, free enterprise environment. For the present competition in financial-service markets is not an equal contest.

As a public policy concern, however, the really significant question is not merely the adverse effects of the present regulatory situation on American financial institutions, but on the American public.

The consumer of financial services in the United States actually has no way of knowing whether his needs are being met in the manner most suited to his convenience and at the minimum possible cost, because artificial constraints and barriers in the financial marketplace have systematically barred free competition among both his suppliers of credit and the users of his money.

What the consumer does know is that credit seems to be most readily obtainable and convenient to use in the sector of the marketplace that suffers the least regulation. And the suspicion arises that services might improve still further, and cost less, if this sector of the market were not shielded from the competition of the more regulated sector, and vice versa. It is the individual's savings that are the original and, in fact, the sole source of capital, and it is the individual citizen from whom government derives whatever authority it possesses to regulate the use of that capital. If the Supreme Court was right in its assessment of how the economic interests of the citizen can best be preserved, then our present regulatory system is clearly not accomplishing its purpose.

* * *

Note: These remarks are excerpted from Financial Competition and the Public Interest, a new Citibank study of current trends in the financial marketplace. Copies may be obtained from the Distribution Section, Public Affairs Department, 18th floor, zone 02, 399 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10043.

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his fellow Europeanists saw Jean Monnet as a Kennedy with a French accent. Douglas Dillon insinuated at a cabinet meeting one day that Ball provided Monnet with private information on US policy, a suggestion that angered Ball considerably.

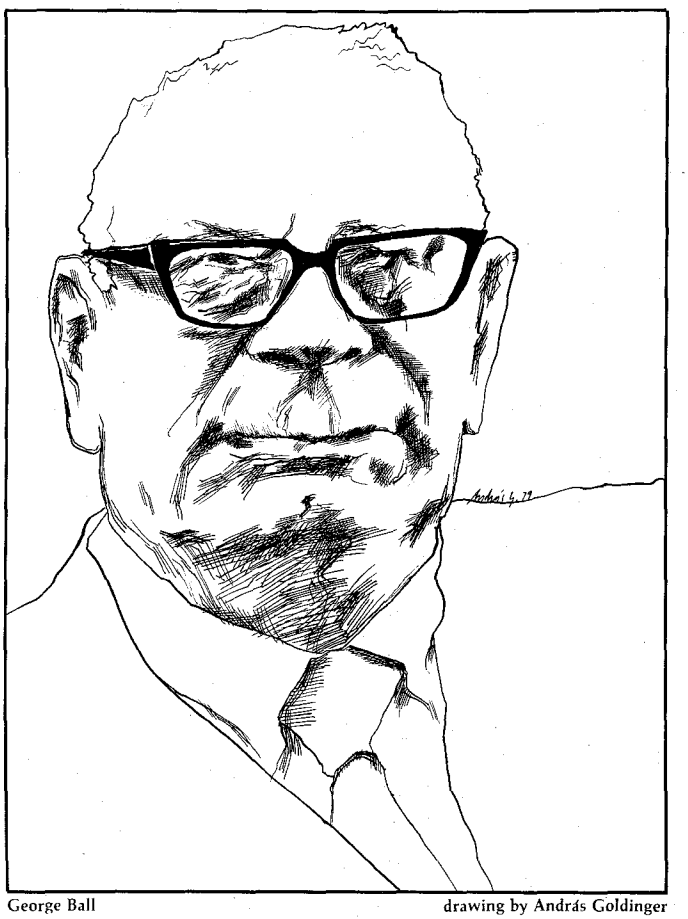
Had Ball been a slightly less religious Europeanist, he would have realized all along that Charles DeGaulle was going to veto British membership in the EEC and blow George Ball's grand design to hell. DeGaulle always said that America only wanted a united Europe to use as an instrument of its own policy. He once noted that Jean Monnet "is not a Frenchman in fee to the Americans—he is a great American." George Ball hated DeGaulle for what he did and DeGaulle became a fixed model for evil in his mind to which he has since found only Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger suitable for comparison.

Despite this setback, Ball retained his belief in the "inevitable" union of Europe into a federation. He considered European union nothing if not pragmatic while ideas concerning things that didn't interest him—developing nations, for instance—he called romantic.

Ball rode in the helicopter with LBJ when Johnson went to live in the White House, and soon set to work saving Europe in spite of itself, something he later offered to do for Israel. He revived the idea of a multilateral NATO nuclear force inside NATO, something he wanted to establish with, without, or even against France. Ball and the men working with him pushed the idea with such fervor throughout Europe that they were known as "the Theologians." Early in 1965, Johnson told Ball to forget it.

In early 1966, Undersecretary of State George Ball reported that the Viet Cong could be in "bad shape soon," that they were becoming increasingly aware that they were not going to win and that he saw "daylight" in Vietnam in a matter of months. On June 26 of that year, Ball announced there had been no decision to bomb Haiphong. Three days later it was bombed.

The Vietnam war threw a nasty crimp into George Ball's plans for himself and Europe as—just as he'd feared—European unity faded as a major issue in direct proportion to the war's escalation. It is often written that Ball was "deeply opposed" to the war in Vietnam. But there is no evidence that Ball was "deeply" against the war, even though he did question it internally. Nor is there much evidence of him being a dove at all. He did write a memo to McNamara, Rusk and Bundy in 1964 outlining US alternatives and the problems he saw in pursuing the war. When leaking documents as well as being an out of office democrat against the war became fashionable five years later, the "Ball memo" found its way into the pages of *The Atlantic*, complete with its TOP SECRET billing. He didn't dwell on the problems of supporting a corrupt regime in the memo but he did mention his fear of a "centrist coup." As everyone knows by now, Ball did write in the memo that he was



George Ball drawing by András Goldinger

against the bombing, but Ball had directed the US Strategic Bombing Survey after World War II, and so he knew—from climbing through the rubble of Europe with Adlai Stevenson and dining with old friends—about the inefficacy of trying to bomb people either out of production or into submission. So George Ball's problem with bombing was that it wouldn't work. Ball concluded his famous memo by apologizing for not having a solution to the problem and adding that we therefore ought to continue to further wear down the enemy.

Long after he'd become the "lonely dove" symbol, Ball continued to express his disdain for those who found moral flaws in the war. Ball enclosed the word "immoral," when used in reference to the war, in quotation marks. He scoffed at "placard carrying hysterics" with their "abject morality," and at "the saintly breed and their nobler perceptions of youth." He complained in one of his books that the "shrill hysteria" produced a hardened siege mentality within the administration and thus frustrated his single-handed efforts to stop the war.

Ball saw a perversion of his design for Europe in "the indulgent conceit that Washington and the Saigon governments were 'equal partners.'" He also scoffed at the idea that Catholics, Buddhists, Hoa Hoes and Cao Dailes of Vietnam could be integrated into a nation as the French, Germans, Italians and British of Europe so obviously could. Most Ball watchers agree that the foundations of his opposition to the Vietnam war were

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in his observation that it was taking important minds off the real issues of the world between the Berkshires and the Urals.

Ball says that he stayed so long at State with such decreased power because he always believed that Dean Acheson would help him get the secretary's job. He didn't get it and finally gave up in 1966 to go into investment banking.

Nineteen sixty-eight, however, was another big year for George Ball. He succeeded Arthur Goldberg as ambassador to the UN, his new status as anti-war symbol supposedly proving the US desire to find peace in Vietnam. He thought the UN was important but it was an international organization with little supranationalist spirit and none in accord with his own grand designs.

So a few months later there were probably few regrets attendant to his resignation, amid more publicity than he'd ever generated before, in order to help Hubert Humphrey become president. Throughout his long diplomatic career Ball has always retained a strong partisan loyalty—especially toward those he hoped would be Democratic presidents. He headed Volunteers for Stevenson in 1952 and was a close adviser to "the governor" in 1956. He didn't expect the top job in 1956—only the number-three job he later got from Kennedy with Stevenson's help. But in Humphrey, Ball finally saw a potential winner who undoubtedly would have made him secretary of state. After the defeat, like so many of his friends in the French civil service, he "parachuted" back into the private sector as a partner at Lehman Brothers and proceeded to compensate for his frustrated dreams of power with the tangible acquisition of cash. He served the investment banking house as a "fount of knowledge" and as a contact with international movers and shakers. It is said rather lovingly at Lehman Brothers that he wouldn't know a transaction if it bit him.

While out of government, Ball kept his seat in the shadow cabinet by writing particularly readable articles in *The Atlantic* and *Foreign Affairs*, and publishing two books. Ball once said that what he loved about Stevenson was his ability to "puncture the arrogance of power." Ball's prose demonstrates the man's awareness of power as well as his inability to puncture its mystical allure. His language is imbued with a spirit of hierarchy. The indexes of his books (*The Discipline of Power* and the loftily subtitled *Diplomacy for a Crowded World: an American Foreign Policy*) are filled with names like Spengler, Tacitus and the oft-quoted Duke of Wellington—all of whom seem to have supported the thoughts of George W. Ball at one time or another.

Ball simply dislikes small policies, or policies concerning small places, or even policies designed for small periods of time. From Monnet he learned that it is often easier for a country to commit itself, or to be committed irrevocably, to a situation than to try to move toward the situation in stages. He imagines a world of gargantuan alliances, integration of disparate nations, new world arrangements and reorganizations. He looks at a world made up of 177 nation-states and countless subdivisions and something in him allows him to see only "the US *with* Europe," "Europe *with* Africa," the "US *with* Latin America," etc. The near-perfect musculature of the monsters seems to awe him.

Ball's fondness for impressive structures turned him into a highly visible champion of multinational corporations, a sort of businessman's Hegalian.

His controversial solution for Israel seems grounded in a feeling that the country is just too small to play so large and dangerous a role in the world. The solution should therefore be a matter for the Soviets and Americans, possibly with the concurrence of the French and British. He feels the decision should be foisted by the powerful upon the inconsequential despite the inevitable "shrill ad hominem response" of American supporters of Israel.

Ball seems to believe that a foreign policy does need a popular constituency to survive. But given his attitudes about the importance of public opinion concerning the Middle East and Vietnam, he also seems to think that the constituency should be created like one of his new superpowers rather than that a policy should be formed that will have a natural following.

Ball's statements about the relative inconsequence of communism's spread into parts of the third world has lent a much-needed voice of restraint, though his reputation as a dove has diminished its strength. His early proposal that we should let the Soviets try to take a few developing nations on as clients and see how they like it has proven to be prophetic.

Nineteen seventy-six could have been a big year for George Ball. *Diplomacy for a Crowded World* was supposed to be his application for secretary of state. Jimmy Carter lost one copy of the book and got another in time to mark it up before the television debates. But Vance and Brzezinski had been courting Carter for a long time and there was little chance that the three of them could get in. So despite the new administration's tendency to recycle bald spares from the old diplomatic trunk, George Ball was not among the top-level appointees by a Democratic president for the first time in nearly 30 years. It may have been too that George Ball's structural elitism never allowed him to take Jimmy Carter seriously. His views on Israel probably didn't help. But in any event the occupant of the office he's always sought would have had to have been an unnatural and modified version of George Ball. Europe is but a parody of his plan for it and its statesmen are hardly like those with whom Ball worked and dreamed after the war. The days of grand designs made in the image of America have given way to smaller symbols and images such as that presently embodied by the man with so many almosts attached to his name.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Daring

"The way of transgressors is hard," says Proverbs. Nowhere more so than in film. Transgression goes beyond the limits of law and custom, and an art that lives by wide acceptance tends to defend law and custom. Yet film continually attracts transgressors because the medium is so powerful, the possible audience so large, the potential for mischief so great. (See Amos Vogel's book, *Film as a Subversive Art*.)

The organized film world has two ways of punishing transgressors. The first, obvious one is exclusion. The second, more subtle and more deadly, is embrace. Nothing stifles transgressors so surely as success. Richard Lester makes *How I Won the War*, the most ruthless mockery of the killer instinct and of platitudinous patriotism that has ever reached the screen, and a few years later—flattened by the failure of a surrealist comedy, *The Bed Sitting Room*—Lester is doing *The Three Musketeers*. Ralph Bakshi slashes at the fakeries of libertarianism and the ugliness of modern life with new animation techniques in *Coonskin*, and a few years later he's making *Lord of the Rings*, which should be playing at Carvel shops throughout the country. No need to worry about trouble from those two chaps anymore.

Now there's Bertrand Blier. This French director's first film, *Going Places* (*TNR*, July 6 & 13, 1974), was unbearable to some people, but even they didn't always know *how* unbearable it was meant to be. It patently outraged sanctities like marriage, motherhood, law. Its two young men were (to quote myself) "visual embodiments of id on the loose among civilization's discontents." But the film was also attacking two kinds of revolution. It satirized the New Wave. (Imagine—Godard among the graybeards!) And, implicitly, it mocked the political romance, the romantic politics, of 1968. The two youths were "out for nothing—not even nihilism." *Going Places*, which ended with the two young men headed for long imprisonment, was doubly disturbing. Their amorality was numbing: we see it every day in the newspapers, and we haven't yet found a way to make those who don't care *care*. And the quality of the filmmaking was so good that it protected the picture from conventional reproof. In effect Blier was saying: "How can you criticize my non-belief if it enables me to work at this level?"

His next film *Femmes Fatales* (*TNR*, October 22, 1977) lost that second effect because it wasn't well-made—it wobbled increasingly as it went. But the intent this time was even more abrasive. Blier took one of the themes of his first film, misogyny, and centered on it. In *Going Places* women were treated as objects, utensils, the two men's attitude being that this is what women really want even if they pretend otherwise. *Femmes Fatales* was again about two men, this time older and this time sick of women—most specifically, sick of vaginas. (One of them is a gynecologist.) They flee female company, and keep fleeing—into fantasy. Chased by libidinous women, they hide inside the cavernous vagina of a reclining naked black female giant. They are safe, they think. Then we see the approach of a naked black male giant. *Femmes Fatales* was much more than antisentimental, it was meant to be hatefully reactionary, to make us look at the vitality of our prejudices. I wish it had been better done so that I could have laughed more at its hatefulness, been raked more by its disclosures of latent prejudice, instead of being aware of its debility as film.

No such problem now. Blier's new film, *Get Out Your Handkerchiefs* (New Line), is well enough made but weak. The two leading actors from his first film, Gerard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere, move through a script that, in the first half, is at about the outrage level of early Philippe de Broca, though not as deftly directed, and in the second half is a weak dilution of Buñuel. Depardieu's wife, Carol Laure, has become apathetic, so he asks another man, Dewaere, who has been eyeing her in a restaurant, to sleep with her. Soon they become a trio, a mod Jules and Jim with an affectless Catherine. The Truffaut influence is seen further in various cutenesses: talking to strangers who become immediately involved; and odd characteristics (Dewaere has a huge paperback collection and knows each book by number). In *Going Places* the bisexuality of the two men surfaced: here it is kept implicit, through their open sharing of the same woman.

Through work at a summer camp, they meet a rich, bright 13-year-old boy, with Blier rather heavily opposing the serious boy to the boyish men. Eventually Laure goes to bed with the boy, who apparently does what the men have failed to do—he awakens her. (An echo of *Going Places* where the girl whom the two men share has her first orgasm with someone else.) The two men go to jail because they kidnap the boy for the girl, but they get short sentences because no ransom was asked. (Another idea—the imprisonment—from *Going Places*, again softened.) After their release, the men peer in the windows of the mansion where Laure is now a maid tending the boy's paralyzed father (the Buñuel touch) and tending the boy differently. All this is fixed by Jean Penzer's camera in a cool and glassy style that would have been perfect for the surgical picture that was not made.

The title is meant to prepare us for an

Films Worth Seeing

Autumn Sonata. The one film in this list recommended unreservedly. Ingrid Bergman and Liv Ullmann, as mother and daughter, directed by Ingmar Bergman. Superb.

The Deer Hunter. Male bonding, here and in Vietnam. Exceptional acting, good direction, but a slow and inorganic script.

Girlfriends. Some truth about a New York young woman today, in Claudia Weill's first feature, flawed but absorbing.

The Wiz. Reportedly cost $35 million. Allowing for Diana Ross, you might enjoy watching them spend it.

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anti soap opera. But if the boy were 16 instead of 13, the film would have no real anti-conventionality whatever; and all that the three-year difference does is make us laugh and (speaking as a male) make us regretful about our own adolescences. The story, as such, has zero outrage in it. The only disquieting element is the recurrent Blier attitude toward women: what a woman really needs or wants is nothing other than a good hump. But even that idea isn't used aggressively, as he has used it in the past. *Handkerchiefs* feels as if Blier had been tapped by the money men. "Make us one of your outrage pictures, Blier, but make one we can *sell*." Whether that actually happened or not, the result looks it. *Handkerchiefs* is now hugged and welcomed, and one more tiger is in the zoo. Will he stay there?

Around 1945, when *Superman* was a 15-minute-daily radio serial, a friend and I, late one night, concocted a two-week story outline for the show, which next day we sold to the producer. I can't remember one scrap of our story, but I'll bet that it was better than the plot of the new *Superman* film (Warner Bros.). According to the newspapers, the first script was written by Mario Puzo (possibly the most appropriately named man since Wallace Beery); he is still first on the bill, but his script was completely rewritten by David Newman and Robert Benton who—though the producers didn't even know it!—had written the book of a Broadway musical about Superman in 1966, a show I liked. Benton had to leave before the script was accepted, and (Mrs.) Leslie Newman carried on with her husband for six or seven rewrites. I hardly need to add that the result is blah. (I *wish* I could remember what my friend and I cooked up at 2 a.m. that night in 1945.) Not only blah but occasionally inexplicable even in the script's own terms. For instance, the entrance to the villain's headquarters seems to be far under Grand Central Terminal in New York, but the interior seems to be in the terminal itself.

I suppose the blame levels finally on the producers, Alexander and Ilya Salkind, along with the blame for casting the prosy Gene Hackman as the grandiloquent villain and the raspy Margot Kidder, who plays Lois Lane like a reformed hooker. But then the Salkinds must also get the credit for casting Christopher Reeve, a mammoth box of Wheaties, as Superman, just humorlessly right, and for the good special effects, done in England, by Colin Chilvers, Roy Field, Les Bowie, and Denys Coop. The director, if it matters, was Richard Donner.

The best actors in the film, none of them exactly at the pinnacle of his career here, are all in the prologue on Krypton: Marlon Brando, Terence Stamp, Trevor Howard, and Harry Andrews. When we get to earth, things get slimmer, although Phyllis Thaxter—a touching ingenue in the 1940s, now Ilya Salkind's mother-in-law—is nice as Superman's earthly foster-mother. We're told that a whole sequel was filmed while this picture was being made. Why not? Why need things ever stop? Why shouldn't there be a Superman picture every two years?

We Superman writers know that the big trouble is that he *is* Superman. How do you keep him from solving all the plot difficulties right at the beginning? You have to divert the viewer from that logic with lots of *stuff*: the wrestling with a missile in flight, the rescue of the president's plane, the repairing of earthquakes. There's plenty of such stuff here and Reeve is likable, so it's probably irrelevant to press the picture further. (But the Broadway musical had some wit and point.) Two notes. The first time Clark Kent has to change, his glance at one of those new telephone non-booths is funny. And nobody says, "It's a bird. . . . " etc.

Creativity vs. Generativity

The Unexamined Lie

. . . sitting at the table, thinking of the book I have written, the child which I have carried for years and years in the womb of the imagination as you carried in your womb the children you love, and of how I had fed it day after day out of my brain and memory. . .

—James Joyce
to Nora

Only a man (or a woman who had never been pregnant) would compare creativity to maternity, pregnancy to the creation of a poem or novel. The comparison of human gestation to human creativity is by now a conventional metaphor—as largely unexamined as the dead metaphors in our everyday speech (i.e. arm of a chair, leg of a table)—but it is also thoroughly inexact.

Although the *idea* for a poem or novel often comes as if unbidden, a gift from the Muse (or the communal unconscious), and although at rare, blessed moments, one may write *as if* automatically, as if in the grip of an angel who seems to push one's pen across the page, still, most often, literary creativity is sheer hard labor, quite different from the growing of a baby in the womb, which goes on despite one's conscious will and is, properly speaking, God's miracle, or nature's, and does not belong to the individual woman who provides it with a place to happen. On the contrary, the growing of the fetus in the womb is DNA's triumph, the triumph of the genes, the triumph of the species. The woman whose body is the site of this miracle is, in a sense, only being used by the species temporarily in its communal passion to survive. The writing of a book can, of course, be seen as the Muse working through the voice, hand and will of an individual creator, but that individual creator must labor hard indeed to be worthy of being a vessel for the Muse since she is a stern taskmistress and will withdraw her favors from the lazy, slovenly or self-pitying artist. Nature, on the other hand, is all-forgiving. Any womb, any woman, may be the vessel for her continuance. Willing assent is hardly even necessary: only a healthy womb, and the will not to deliberately destroy the fetus.

How much more passive pregnancy is than creativity! Creativity demands conscious, active will; pregnancy only demands the absence of ill-will. Perhaps the desire to equate them arises from the artist's ancient wish that creativity be as effortless, easy and unconscious as the creation of a fetus. Or perhaps the

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male artist's desire to equate the two arises out of his envy of the female ability to generate life. Like most forms of envy, it is absurd. One might as well envy the hummingbird for being able to stand still in mid-air, or the flounder for having two eyes on one side of its head. Whatever joys there are in pregnancy (and there are many) they are not the joys of consciousness, nor the joys of intellect, nor the joys of art, nor the joys of civilization. Pregnancy is perhaps most enjoyable to the over-civilized, over-intellectualized woman precisely for that reason.

Certainly this was true for me. All my life I had mistrusted my body and overvalued my mind. I had sought a very high degree of control over my environment and my body—a degree of control perhaps best represented by the fact that I never became pregnant, not even "accidentally," until well after my 35th birthday, and well after having spent a year or more consciously wishing for pregnancy and trying to become pregnant. I had dreaded pregnancy as a loss of control over my destiny, my body and my life. I had fantasies of death in childbirth, the death of my creativity during pregnancy, the alteration of my body into something monstrous, the loss of my intelligence through mysterious hormonal sabotage, the loss of my looks, my energy, my robustness.

But I ought to have known that the ruler of the cosmos is nothing if not a Joker—and all the opposite things happened. For the first time in my life, I controlled my weight effortlessly; my face grew thinner, my skin clearer, my eyes brighter. I never felt sick or lacked energy. I worked as hard at my writing as I ever had in my life—and, in fact, worked with greater consistency. I wrote a number of poems, continued to toil productively at the novel I had begun a year before becoming pregnant, and even undertook a grueling book tour for my second novel when I was in my fifth and sixth months of pregnancy. Certainly I worked as hard as I did partly to undercut the myth that pregnant women are somehow incapacitated (or else "too fulfilled" by burgeoning life to need creative work as well), but mostly, it was a case of genuinely feeling good, feeling very much myself (only now freed from the gnawing anxiety that I would never have a child) and having genuine gusto for creative work. Whatever pregnancy "fulfilled" in me (and I do not underestimate that fulfillment at all), it was a wholly different order of fulfillment from the one I seek through my creative work. Might as well compare the delights of swimming or skiing with the delights of writing or researching. They simply aren't comparable; and every life needs both physical and mental challenges.

Pregnancy felt particularly good to me, I think, because it was an affirmation of life for one who had once been prone to a romantic infatuation with death. At twenty-five I may have wished with Keats "to cease upon the midnight with no pain," but at thirty-five I had turned away from the romantic infatuation with death, the worship of poetic suicides, the idealization of poets who died of TB, or poets who died as martyrs to woman's lot—and I now wished to show myself (and perhaps also the world) that both poets and women could be survivors. It was a turn from romantic to classic, from martyr to survivor, from self-destroyer to self-affirmer, from worshipper of sickness to worshipper of health. And having a successful, easy pregnancy was a way of telling myself that the core of my being was healthy and could not only confer life upon myself, but on others as well.

I think that to a large extent the artists and intellectuals in our society worship illness, as if it were illness that conferred art rather than art that conferred a temporary reprieve from illness. In part, this is one legacy of 19th-century Romanticism, but in part it also stems from the misconception that the mind can only be nourished at the expense of the body—as if health were a finite commodity (like oil or electricity) and one could only fill one area by depleting others. This is one of the many falsehoods inherent in materialism, and often it corrupts our view of artistic creativity. Critics sometimes fault artists for being too prolific—as if creativity were a material substance, a sort of natural resource which could be depleted by too wanton use. In fact, the contrary is true. Both creativity and health are self-replenishing; the more they are used, the more they flourish and regenerate.

Bodily health and artistic creativity were seen as complementary, not opposing, characteristics by the Greeks and Romans, and it was only when the scourging of the flesh came to be considered of spiritual benefit by the medieval Christian church that we began to move toward the modern attitude that mortification of the flesh somehow propitiates the creative powers of the mind. The worship of suicidal artists, consumptive poets, alcoholic or insane artists, is an outgrowth of this essentially Christian view that the mind can only flourish at the expense of the body.

Women inherit a double legacy of mistrust in regard to the body. First they share the western Christian heritage that dictates chastity and mortification of the flesh as prerequisites to the spiritual life. But they also inherit the medieval church's primitive attitude toward womankind, childbearing and the female body. For a woman artist, the choice of physical robustness coupled with fertile creativity has been particularly hard—both for psychological and practical reasons. Until the advent of dependable birth control (which is less than a century old) childbearing was not really optional for women except for the deliberately abstinent or accidentally sterile. Pregnancy was too compulsory to be experienced as a choice. But even after the advent of birth control, complex social and psychological forces conspired to make all but the most adamantly individualistic women marry and bear children for most of their adult lives. Pregnancy could hardly be seen as an affirmation of life and health when it was so compulsory, so fraught with dangers for mother and child, and so *constant*. It often did, in fact, herald the end of other forms of creativity, and the fact that many women artists avoided it like the plague and then referred to their books or paintings as "their children" is not surprising.

I belong to one of the first generations of women artists for whom pregnancy is not compulsory (despite the psychological pressures for motherhood that still do exist, not to mention the increasing legal threats to reproductive freedom) and therefore one of the first generations of women artists to be able to examine the paradox of artistic creativity vs. biological generativity. Neither George Eliot nor Jane Austen had that option. Even Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf were not really able

"IT LOOKS AS IF Andrei Voznesensky, a Russian poet of the non-dissident school, will be the new Yevtushenko, provided he can keep up the pace: 'It is terrible,' he grins. 'Every day a plane. Every night a reading.' Soviet poets, like Soviet chessplayers, need stamina. As they say in the Kremlin, publish or perish."

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to regard childbearing as a choice; the legacy of Victorian womanhood was too close and too frightening. In their time the only way for a woman artist to combat the Victorian stereotype of "the angel in the house" was to turn around and become the devil (or else to assert that they were mothers of books, and thus *had* fulfilled the ideal of womanhood, albeit in another way).

For years I was determined not to have a child precisely because many of the women writers I admired most had not had children. If childlessness was good enough for Virginia Woolf and Jane Austen, it ought to be good enough for me. One could also mention Emily Dickinson, Edith Wharton, George Eliot, and, closer to our own time, Simone de Beauvoir and Edna St. Vincent Millay. Yet the worm of desire for a child gnawed at me constantly and gnawed at my poems as well. Precisely because I was so afraid of childbearing, I was drawn to it, for I had found that all the greatest steps in my development as an individual were made possible by my doing the very things I feared the most. Having a child seemed to me a rite of passage (without which one could still certainly be a perfectly fulfilled woman, prolific artist and spiritually developed person), but also without which one would have failed to have one of the crucial experiences of the human race. What point would there be in having passed a whole incarnation in a female body without experiencing, at least once, all the potentialities of that body? It would be like being incarnated as a bird and never flying. But still, I hesitated. Childbearing had always taken too much of a toll on women. It had meant jeopardizing the things writers needed most—peace, quiet, a lack of interruptions. It had meant diluting passions which one wanted undiluted for one's work. It was not only the drudgery of childbearing which seemed threatening to art, but the pleasures. Babies are most distracting when they are most pleasurable Besides, it had taken me years to free myself of the guilt I felt toward my parents and the men in my life when I shut myself away to write. How would I ever deal with the guilt created by a creature who *really* needed me for its physical survival?

There was no way to solve all these problems in advance. I would have to take the plunge and find the solutions later. I would have to give up my constant need to control and manipulate my life, to control and manipulate the future. Control of the future is a delusion anyway, for the future always defeats our most carefully made plans, and the belief that we can control it is merely an instance of human hubris. I came to the conclusion that whatever was lost by introducing this great element of uncertainty into my life would be more than repaid by the new experiences and insights it would bring. For I had belatedly discovered that art cannot exist without life, and that those writers who are overcareful to limit their lives (in the hope of screening out all interruptions) often wind up with nothing to write about, or else are so spiritually impoverished by denying themselves human relationships that all their psychic wounds fester and they destroy themselves and their creativity in various other ways—alcoholism, destructive marriages, other addictions.

I tried to hedge my bets as best I could—controlling as much as possible without trying to control everything. I did not become pregnant until I found a man who really wanted to share all aspects of childrearing with me and I waited for a time in my life when there was enough money for plenty of help. Had those two conditions never arisen, I would probably never have risked becoming pregnant. Whether this makes me cowardly or prudent, I cannot say. I will never be able to claim that I sacrificed all to have a child, but then I am not quite sure that rearing a child in such a spirit of sacrifice is a favor either to the child or to the mother. All I know is that I did the only thing I *could* do at the time. For the first thirty-five years of my life, writing was so much more important to me than anything else, that I could not risk *any* turn of fate that might jeopardize my own still shaky self-confidence as a writer or my need to establish a sense of vocation, regular work habits, and a pattern of self-discipline. For one cannot become a novelist or poet overnight. Even if the talent is there, it takes years to form the *habit* of writing, the sitting down at the desk in the morning, the knowledge of one's own evasions, one's fears of writing, fears of failure, fears of success. Women who bear children *before* they establish these habits of work may never establish them at all, however easy their economic circumstances may be. Having been defined first as mothers (rather than as writers) they may never be able to see themselves in another light and the demands of their children may always drown out the demands of their books.

I only know that I am grateful to have been born into a time when it was possible for a woman to delay childbearing until other life patterns were firmly established. Does it bespeak optimism or pessimism for the human race to recognize that (with the possible exception of the prehistoric matriarchies) this is the best time for women the western world has ever known? The discrimination against us is still rampant and virulent. Given how many practical obstacles stand in the way of most of us doing creative work at all, the malignity with which that work is often treated is nothing less than criminal. But still, the fact that we choose when and whether to bear children has changed our lives to a degree unthinkable for the thousands upon thousands of mute, laboring generations of women. The very fact that no generation before ours has really been in a position to challenge the lie that creativity and generativity are one and the same makes us privileged beyond any earlier generations. And that privilege rests almost entirely upon motherhood remaining optional for us. It is the key to all our freedoms—even the freedom to dwell seriously on the meaning of pregnancy and childbirth. For one only has the luxury of philosophical contemplation when a degree of detachment is present. As long as motherhood was constant and compulsory, women *could* not examine motherhood compassionately (and without rage), nor probably could men resist idealizing it.

I think we have never quite considered the implications of the fact that most of the literature about pregnancy and birth has been written either by men or by women who forswore childbearing in order to do their creative work. Even after women writers began to have children more frequently (in the last two generations) they often resisted writing directly about their experiences for fear of criticism according to partriarchal standards ("don't wear your ovaries on your sleeve") or for fear of seeming sentimental or trivial. Pregnancy and birth were considered minor, foolish, "female" subjects, and women writers who aspired to the heights of Parnassus often disdained them as their male mentors had taught them to do. So the lie that creativity and generativity were somehow interchangeable continued unchallenged for generations. Even in our own day, it has been insufficiently examined.

Neither the women who denied the childbearing urge in order to create

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books, nor the men who had wives to bear children for them, were in a position to chart the terra incognita of pregnancy and childbirth. Both were prejudiced parties, outsiders, partisans of the party of childlessness. Similarly, women who bore children under various compulsions (no abortions, no birth control, fear of parental disapproval, a husband's wrath, abandonment by those one loved, the dreaded loss of the imprimatur of "good woman") were in no position to dispassionately examine the meaning of childbirth and pregnancy. Mute, enraged, trapped first by their own bodies, then by society, they could feel only fury at their helplessness and loss of control—however much they may have loved the infants they produced. (The record of recent feminist literature is full of such testaments to rage at men and simultaneous love of children—the classic female ambivalence).

So, now we stand at a literary crossroads made entirely possible by childbirth having become a choice. All efforts to withdraw that choice must be seen as efforts to put women back into the mute rage from which they have so recently begun to emerge. What untold wonders would world literature contain if it told the story of pregnancy, childbirth, and childbearing as well as the story of childlessness? What untold stories might we hear if mothers as well as fathers were able to relate their tales? The history of world literature is the history of the literature of the male, the white man, the aristocrat, the affluent bourgeois, and the childless woman. How different it might look if mothers were writers too! It might be like discovering the lost continent of Atlantis—right in our kitchens and bedrooms. It might be like irrigating the desert and suddenly seeing it bloom. It would certainly put an end, once and for all, to the notion that books are like babies, and babies even remotely are like books. For a book's creative demands upon its author end at the moment of publication; while a baby only begins to call forth *conscious* creativity, after it emerges from the unconscious Eden of the womb.

Erica Jong

Erica Jong is a poet and novelist. Her fourth book of poems, *At the Edge of the Body*, will be published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston in March.

Books Considered

The Annotated Shakespeare edited, with an introduction, notes, a biography and bibliography by A. L. Rowse

(Clarkson N. Potter; $60)

Every now and then, as if to redeem itself, commercial publishing will lavish its superior resources on an ambitious and worthy project with what can only be described as inspired beneficence (no irony meant). *The Annotated Shakespeare*—a mammoth three-volume illustrated edition of Shakespeare's complete plays and sonnets—is plainly such an endeavor, and Clarkson N. Potter has reason to call it "a publishing event." Though it has the look of a coffee-table book (it was timed for Christmas giving), its appearance belies a certain editorial panache and purity of intent: to take the bard out of the study and into the living room, where more of life goes on.

After all, the argument might run, Shakespeare is not the exclusive property of the scholar and litterateur; he is the playwright and poet who, better than any other, tells us about life and about ourselves in the purest of human terms. Since the common reader could be put off by criticism and explication, might it not be wise to keep these at a minimum, adding, instead, instruction in the areas of major difficulty—the linguistic and historical—created by the 400 years that separate us from Shakespeare's time? And what about enlarging on visual appeal to lure readers who left Shakespeare in the classroom? Finally, and most important, the edition must be placed in the hands of an authority who writes with verve and individuality.

If one accepts the premise of an Everyman's Complete Shakespeare—and who would want to discourage that possibility?—it is not possible to ignore *The Annotated Shakespeare*. Visually it captures the prospective reader. The bright, airy feel of the pages, with their wide margins, their clean, clear type, provide an ideal setting for the Globe edition text—a text comfortable in its familiarity, if not up-to-date in its scholarship. Most readers will be instantly drawn to the cornucopia of illustrations that offers a fascinating record of Shakespearian performances from Sarah Bernhardt's Hamlet to Orson Welles's Lear, Ellen Terry's Cordelia to Lily Langtry's Cleopatra—not to mention the numerous great roles Lawrence Olivier has played on both stage and screen. Here is a chance to view the variety of acting styles and concepts great actors have brought to their roles. And there are examples of artists' concepts, as well, from medieval manuscripts to 18th- and 19th-century painters (Delacroix's romantic Hamlet, Benjamin West's stylized Lear, Millais's haunting *Death of Ophelia*). Occasional clips from motion pictures are there to remind us that Hollywood once cared about Shakespeare. There is one noticeable gap: no pictures showing the ultramodern renditions of Shakespeare made popular here in the 1960s.

At first sight, the choice of A. L. Rowse as guide would seem to be exactly right. For, as he himself has remarked, who knows more about Elizabethan England or has a firmer grasp of the language Shakespeare used? Rowse's individuality as an historian has been both his strength and his weakness in the past. This Oxford don has worn his academic mantle lightly, and fellow critics have found his boldly expressed views on Shakespeare and other Elizabethans dogmatic and specious. But his books have not been dull, and it is unlikely that the readers of his prefaces to the plays will fault him for excessive theorizing or impersonality. Quite the contrary.

The Annotated Shakespeare might more accurately have been titled *The Annotated Shakespeare of A. L. Rowse*, for it is Rowse's Shakespeare as it has never been the

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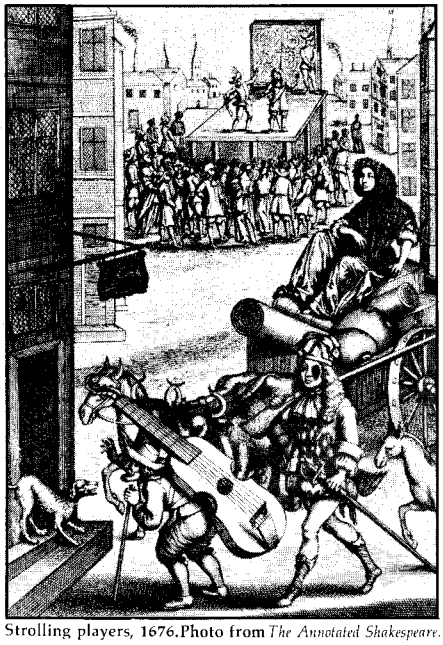
Shakespeare of other annotators. Over the years I have read the plays in a variety of editions (Arden, Cambridge, London, Penguin, Riverside, etc.) with little awareness of whose notations I was reading. As a Shakespearian critic Rowse is no match for a Harry Levin or a Jan Kott (two very accessible contemporary scholars) but neither critic commands Rowse's familiarity with the bric-a-brac of Shakespeare's world or is so zealously proprietary of the bard. Rather than turn Shakespeare into "our contemporary," Rowse has himself become a fellow Elizabethan, brandishing what he sees as the most valuable key to Shakespeare's work: the historical background with all its *physical* texture.

The usefulness of that key is hard to deny. No writer, least of all a dramatist, can be fully understood apart from his time, and, undeniably, more ludicrous, far-fetched theories have proliferated around Shakespeare from sheer ignorance of historical facts than around any other writer. History and biography, on the other hand, cannot do the work of criticism—though sometimes a gifted biographer can bring new insights to a writer's work. As a biographer of Shakespeare, Rowse has bouncing confidence in his facts but little subtlety in his interpretation of them. The thick strokes of his pen produce an easily graspable image of the bard that belies any shade refracted by the later plays. At all times, Shakespeare is clear-cut to Rowse.

In his 1963 biography of Shakespeare and in his book on the sonnets the following year, Rowse sought to clear Shakespeare of the charge of homosexuality, emphasizing the dual nature of love in the sonnets—one platonic, for his patron, the Earl of Southampton, the other passionate, for the Dark Lady (whom he has since identified as Emilia Lanier, the Earl's mistress). Now, in *The Annotated Shakespeare*, he is intent on presenting Shakespeare as "a family man," "a normal man," a conservative fully in tune with the social order and barely critical of Elizabethan thought. But even if one thinks of the sanguine, romantic nature of the comedies, it is hard to accept this view in full.

In these days of "sick" souls, Rowse may be forgiven (even lauded) for stressing Shakespeare's normality; he is certainly not off the mark in pointing out the playwright's penchant for Elizabethan bawdiness—"nothing snooping or prurient, just the normal, highly sexed, heterosexual's enjoyment of 'the facts of life.'" The gusto with which he drills us in the Elizabethan idiom through the notations in the book is largely, one suspects, to tune us in to the innuendos and puns that abound in the plays. There is no disputing, too, "the astonishing realism" with which the playwright drew lower-class life, nor Rowse's linking of it to the fact that Shakespeare came from the heart of



Strolling players, 1676. Photo from *The Annotated Shakespeare.*

England, Warwickshire, and thus felt close to "the native tradition"; he understood "the caricatures, malapropisms, the lapses" of the common people and was familiar with the jester, the clown, the fool (developing the latter to suit his philosophical need). Rowse aptly quotes Walter Bagehot on Shakespeare's wisdom in recognizing that "for most of the purposes of human life, stupidity is the most valuable element." Such tolerance, he points out, makes the biting view of a Swift unthinkable in Shakespeare's comedies. Rowse fully appreciates that "compassionate imagination" (as he puts it) which makes even a farce like *The Taming of the Shrew* "therapeutic."

But Rowse's own imaginative response to that play—as to so many others— is quite another matter. Claiming that "the war of the sexes" was an expression of the age and "the moral driven home [in the play] was in keeping with it," he asks the reader to imagine the Padua merchant's loud-mouthed daughter Kate as an Elizabethan lady. Kate's reversal to "norm" at the end of the play, often played tongue-in-cheek, is seen as a literal change of heart, confirming Shakespeare's "conservatism." But what, then, does one make of Beatrice or Portia, what of Lady Macbeth (would that she had been less independent!), and all the other bold and resourceful women in Shakespeare?

Rowse has no trouble distinguishing between the various types of Shakespearian comedy, from straight romantic (*As You Like It, Twelfth Night*), "bourgeois farce" (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), tragi-comedy (*The Merchant of Venice*), dark comedy (*Troilus and Cressida*) to "morality play" (*All's Well That Ends Well*), but he might as well be a cataloguer for all the clues he gives readers of their relative merit as dramatic art. On *Measure for Measure*, he is so carried away by its gallery of bawds, pimps and jailbirds that he puts the cart before the horse and speaks of Shakespeare's "Dickensian inventiveness"! In this play he sees Shakespeare as "a government man" who understands too well "the mystery of state." "Government" may have been the main theme of the play, as Rowse claims, but the illustrations alone tell us more about the confrontation of morality with sexual passion that the play exposes. Though he notes that Shakespeare was writing *Othello* in the same year, he fails to point out the greater complexity of Othello's position with regard to the theme of moderation expounded in the comedy.

As the playwright moves from the lighter vein—which has centered on the social world—to the more somber, inner world, Rowse's historical and biographical references seem even less pertinent. When he establishes *Coriolanus* as "almost entirely political" in content and turns for sources of its inspiration to the Midland troubles over corn (which affected Shakespeare as a landowner), he tells us little about Shakespeare's dramatic progress or of his use of history—his way of drawing psychic meaning from public actions. His notion of Shakespeare as "a government man," moreover, finds him identifying the playwright with the patrician Coriolanus. Yet one has to read this play as a drama of warped character to understand its power to move modern audiences (as its huge London success this past summer attests). Had Rowse turned back to *Troilus and Cressida*, he could have seen that Shakespeare's disenchantment with military heroes first surfaced with ironic effect in that play in the conflict between the idealistic Trojans and the cynical Greeks. But his literal reading of *Troilus* would perhaps not have made such insights possible. Not only has he missed the hollow dialectic of Ulysses's

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THE HOUSE IN ATHENS

Walls of blond-washed cement
With us inside have risen,
These years, from rags to riches.
Starting with our basement widow "frozen"
Since wartime there by rent
Control (unlike her roaches),

They end high up in splendor—
Well, actually a terrace
Of waving oleander,
Geranium, jasmine at its plumy lushest.
Between extremes the space
Is filled by our two stories.

Mediterranean Fascist
In style, the house would still
Be several years our junior
—Point we haven't scrupled to drive home
By frequent imposition
Of our taste and will:

A Titian red bedroom;
One low-cut balcony
Glass-enclosed and curtained;
The former rooftop laundry—ghosts of dirty
Linen—made to be
The room in which I write.

True, there remain some built-in
Drawbacks: the kitchen window
Too mean for air, for light,
For anything but ineffectual screeching
At a child or cat from
In the dank court below;

Or the storage space. Through gloom
Midway upstairs, on reaching
The portal of this slowly
Brimming, costive diverticulum
One risks his neck to leave,
We risk our wits to enter.

And pipes, of course, that hiss
And grieve, and icy currents
Becoming dog-day smells
In proper season . . . Who once said *The House*
Is Mother? Full concurrence.
Here in the parlor smiles

Escape the guest escaping
In his turn two dwarf chairs
Whittled for hard declensions,
Through the years, from babe in arms to crone.
He's made for couch and cushions
And—there's the telephone.

Who's calling? Mimí? Yannis?
Which Yannis? George? Nelláki?
The rings proliferate,
Overlapping, afternoons, with sticky
Ones of ash-and-anise
We take a sponge to later.

Or else on an illegal
Ten-meter cord the chatter
Trails me inexorably
Up this antique, shuddering iron spiral
To where, with fan or heater,
Teapot and OED,

Shorter lines are busy,
Where summer clouds disperse till
Pinned against the blue
By midday, and from wind-stuffed shirt or jeans
Ever sparser crystal
Drupelets of the view

(Sky, mountain, monastery,
Traffic blur and glint
From center town, the very
Pattern, upon my soul,
Of catalytic inter-
sections in the cell)

Dripping on flagstone, strew
A shade of velveteen,
Rags of moss to contemplate, come winter
—In the odd hour at least
When idle "contemplation"
Isn't the chimney's cue

To act. How often, here
At our bright airiest,
Upgusts of smut have peppered everything!
Kleo torn her hair—
Back gone the wash to soak;
Hose turned on choking plants;

Downstairs the poor old body
Brushed past, and *her* complaints,
For a despairing squint into that dark
Annex where the furnace
Belched and grumbled. Greedy,
Erotic little orc,

Was *it* what kept the house
Through January frost
Flushed with welcome floor-to-floor, the hosts'
Attire neo-Grecian,
Whatever sense of cost
Drowned in a splash of seltzer?

And was it to feed *its*
Facelessness that self-
Made men around the clock succumbed to fits
Of envy and aggression
In air-conditioned Tulsa
Or on the Persian Gulf?

—Where from his kiosk the Sheik
Saw tanker after tanker
Tiny as ants on the horizon play
Slow-motion hide-and-seek
With an obese, rust-cankered
Harem of white roses.

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Think of the house that day
It stood complete but pupal,
Whom a first kiss, light and electric, rouses.
Think of the sudden thrill
Coursing through each vein;
The first meal, the first people.

Now think of that anemic
High-rise Cranach Venus
We saw how many years ago (in Munich?)
With Cupid at her heel—
Quiver and arrow-tip's
Pubescent thermostat.

Though they weren't much our types
—Too sallow, too immodest—
Not having found Greece yet, we spent a while
Admiring "values", "volumes",
"Relationship" of brat
To smiling, cat-faced goddess,

As if in that long hall
The work had been a wonder
Dreamlike, neat, abstractable from all
The moods and codes of matter,
Goings-on kept under
Her nodding ostrich hat.

James Merrill

famous speech on order and chaos, he solemnly compares it to the Elizabethan Book of Homilies! From his viewpoint, it is hard to see Coriolanus as the last of great tragic idealists whom Beethoven evoked in his Overture.

Throughout his discussion of the historical plays, Rowse marvels at Shakespeare's extraordinary political understanding, his involvement with the problems of kingship. Without so much as a nod to the influence of classic drama (in which kings and heroes are interchangeable) or the impact of Renaissance thought (with its fascination in the human will), he offers a simple-minded, arbitrary answer: Shakespeare regarded himself as a king! "Wasn't he a king in his profession?" he asks. Surely nothing could be more lacking in imaginative response—and indeed naive—than his linking of the two King Richards as "psychotic." He writes of Richard III as "the first in a gallery of psychotic characters that includes Richard II, Othello, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, King Lear. . . . " But if both Richards are to be dismissed as such—with "their special appeal to modern psychoanalysis"—what makes one Richard a monster and the other a pathetic, poetic idealist? Characterization is not a specialty of Rowse, though he sets himself up as a biographer. He has no ear for poetry, no heart for pathos. To the gorgeous Elizabethan language that pours out of Richard II's soul, he can only respond: "anyone who loses control in circumstances so favorable to him, deserves what he gets."

As he turns to the tragedies proper, Rowse's inadequacy as a critic of Shakespeare becomes an embarrassment. In a sudden reversal of his historical position, he identifies the Elizabethan age with the modern world, finding common ground on two major counts. We are able today to understand "Shakespeare's tragic depiction of life," because, like the Elizabethans, we live in fear and insecurity; and because of our "remarkable advances in modern psychology," we can appreciate Shakespeare's "psychotic" heroes. "Psychotic" is a word that crops up repeatedly in his comments on the tragic predicaments of Hamlet, King Lear, Iago and others. The mental aberrations they suffer connect in his mind with the horrors of Belsen, Auschwitz and Communist Russia, and with a sudden leap, he announces: "hence the universality of the appeal." His passing references to "archetypal situations," to the Oedipus complex, to Desdemona's numbness from shock, show Rowse has dabbled in Freud and Jung—to little avail. On the other hand, poetic truth—which reflects on the human condition and on man's place in the universe—is not something congenial to this critic who must always connect human beings with their immediate environment.

But beyond the lack of poetic comprehension, Rowse is guilty of imprecise thinking. This Elizabethan expert fails to recognize the great philosophical distance that separates us from Shakespeare's audience. If we experience fear and insecurity in common, we are grossly deficient in the Elizabethan's sense of wonder and awe. We do not respond to the supernatural, except perhaps aesthetically; indeed, our cynicism and apathy in this last quarter of the century links us more directly with the Jacobean world. (Isn't this why Shakespeare's later plays have become more popular in recent years?) Violent and sensual like the Elizabethans we may be, but we lack their sense of guilt and their poetic rationalizations; modern psychology has taken care of that. Conversely, our notion of the absurd did not play a large part in Elizabethan thought—though Shakespeare verged on it in *Troilus and Cressida*, as Joyce Carol Oates has convincingly pointed out. Far more important to the Elizabethan, surely, was the stoic stance, which admitted the possibility of some purpose beyond human comprehension.

For Rowse, then, to speak of Hamlet as "a symbol of modern man caught in his tragic fate and in his awareness of it," is not only misleading but inexcusably glib. One does not need to make Shakespeare our contemporary to feel his great attraction. His true universali-

Staff Change

With this issue, Robert Pinsky becomes poetry editor of *TNR*. Robert Lowell said of him that "he belongs to that rarest of categories, a poet-critic." His *Sadness and Happiness* was chosen in 1975 as the first book in the Princeton Series of Contemporary Poets, published by Princeton University Press. His book about contemporary and modern poetry, *The Situation of Poetry*, originally published in 1977 and received with unusual acclaim, has recently appeared in paperback. *An Explanation of America*, his second book of poems, will be published by Princeton next summer. Robert Pinsky teaches at Wellesley College.

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ty, as that of Dante and Goethe, hinges on our craving to know ourselves outside of time and place, on an elemental and eternal level. One would expect an historian like Rowse to show us Shakespeare's capacity both to be of his age and to move beyond it. Instead, his historical and biographical "elucidations" serve only to obscure Shakespeare's insights into the human heart—which must, finally, remain elusive.

On *Romeo and Juliet* Rowse rattles on about how authentic the details of a great house are (Shakespeare knew Southampton's Holborn). Rather than discuss the character of Hamlet, he decides to "illuminate the real background," thus connecting Hamlet with Essex and shifting the reader's interest to the political crisis of the day. Abruptly, he moves from the subject of Polonius's identity with that of the Lord Treasurer to the subject of ghosts, announcing that Shakespeare did not believe in them. There are other shorthand references to the "evidences of the time" (demonology, the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation, tanistry) in his reading of *Macbeth*—all interesting in themselves, though no attempt is made to link them intrinsically with the drama of warped ambition. It is as if he were dipping helter-skelter into his classroom notes and waiting for his brightest students to make the necessary connections. Rowse's colloquialism, his slapdash scholarship (he refers at one point to "a Jewish critic," at another to "a lady critic" without identifying his sources) also suggests classroom casualness. After telling us that *Othello* was taken from a mediocre story of Cinthio's, he exclaims: "And see what an unforgettable play Shakespeare has made of it! It shows how unimportant 'sources' and all that fuss about them are."

An Everyman's Shakespeare may tolerate impatience with sources but not with ideas. Rowse no sooner brings up the racial question in *Othello* than he glosses over it with a meaningless phrase: "It is so like Shakespeare's universality to have prefigured a prime issue of today." All along, he has characterized Marlowe as anti-authoritarian and Shakespeare as conformist. But comparing *The Jew of Malta* with *The Merchant of Venice*, it becomes apparent that Shakespeare's sympathy for Shylock counters the anti-Semitism of his time. Again, in quick shorthand, Iago is compared to Hitler, Henry VIII's England to Stalin's Russia. In Rowse's hand, that wonderful creation, the Fool in *Lear* becomes a mere mouthpiece for morality lessons, confirming once more "the moral Shakespeare, the family man."

When he comes to the late romances, Rowse gushes forth with period material. In the absence of known sources for *The Tempest*, he pontificates on the founding of Virginia, on Hakluyt's travel literature, on the discovery of Bermuda as "the isle of the Devils" as possible inspirations for the play. He has surprisingly little to say about the changes in Shakespeare's dramatic style as influenced by the changing conventions of the new Jacobean theater. He says nothing at all about how, despite the impasse this created, Shakespeare was able to produce a masterpiece in a new mold. In identifying Caliban as an American Indian he tells us nothing about the philosophical departure suggested in Prospero's pointed reference to Caliban: "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine." Would Shakespeare's acknowledgment of evil as a universal burden, to be shared by all, have surfaced as it did if the revenge motif had not reached its final, decadent peak? In creating a Magus with the power to redeem earthly sinners through the alchemy of the imagination (much as the artist does), Shakespeare achieved that ultimate liberality which sees men inexorably linked to one another. A far cry, indeed, from Shakespeare as narrow conformist! To me *The Tempest* itself says more about Shakespeare than all "the evidences of the times." It certainly says a great deal about Shakespeare as an exemplar of Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent." It is not enough to know Shakespeare as an Elizabethan; we should also know how he transcended his time. But to do so, we must see him first as an artist. And that is something quite different from seeing him—as Rowse does—first as a man.

Nona Balakian

Nona Balakian is an editor of *The New York Times Book Review* and author of a recent book, *Critical Encounters: Literary Views and Reviews, 1953-1977* (Bobbs-Merrill).

Cuba: Order and Revolution by Jorge Domínguez

(The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; $25)

There has been a great deal of writing about Cuba in the last year or two but little attempt to come to grips with the real nature of the present regime there. Jorge Domínguez has made a commendable attempt to fill the gap by writing a general history of the revolution and the regime.

His book has some clear merits. First, he spent the first 15 years of his life in Cuba, and then left for the US in 1960 as part of the largest diaspora the New World has ever seen. This gives Mr. Domínguez a familiarity with Cuban life as it used to be, combined with the possibility of good judgment deriving from being removed from the scene: one can no doubt be a good deal more objective about the Cuban scene as an associate professor at Harvard than in Miami. Another strength of Mr. Domínguez's book is that he relates the Cuban present to the recent past, reminding us of the continuity that still prevails in some parts of the economy between what happened before and since 1959. He is also good hearted by nature and is perfectly prepared to take up a balanced position *ab inition*, as when he praises the government of Cuba's "redistributive programme . . . [and] the virtual eradication of illiteracy," while condemning in the next sentence "the lengthy imprisonment of numerous political dissidents." "Dissident," though, is a poor word to describe those who have passed now nearly 20 years in prison for, in some cases, merely thinking of the ideals which the American constitution proclaims to be self evident. Certain social benefits are of real value only if they enhance the personality of the individual in a free society. Literacy is a case in point. Cuba

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is held by some to have a better "record on" illiteracy than, say, Colombia: but what can be read in Cuba? Not Mr. Domínguez. Would it not be better to be illiterate in ancient Athens than literate in modern Bucharest?

In general, however, Mr. Domínguez's judgments are sound. He is right to remind us that Cuba "cajoled the Soviet Union into accepting the establishment of the first communist state in the Americas" and that there is no evidence whatever, and has never been, that Castro's decisions in 1960-1961 were taken because of any US actions: Cuba was not "pushed" into communism, it was made communist because of the free choice of a group of men, headed by Castro. Perhaps Mr. Domínguez's way of putting this point is open to question, for he suggests that the "revolutionary leaders decided that a revolution in Cuba could not be carried out without a confrontation with the US." Surely the point is that they wanted, as Castro admitted to Romulo Betancourt in January 1959, that confrontation with the US, first and foremost. The initiative taken by Castro in this respect was more daring, incidentally, than any that he might perhaps have taken in 1975 in relation to his willingness to use Cuban soldiers in Angola. A man able to transform "our Cuban colony" into a communist state when he had no modern arms to speak of would not hesitate to embark on an adventure with full Soviet support and with a modern army in a continent so empty and so ready for taking as was Africa.

The most important part of Mr. Domínguez's study is his discussion of the working of the regime as it now is. It is a valiant attempt but not an entirely successful one—inevitably so, since he has no access to Cuban documents. Thus the claim made on the cover of the book by Edward Gonzalez (who should have known better), that Domínguez does for the regime in Cuba what Merle Fainsod did for the one in Russia, is foolish: Professor Fainsod had at his disposal a vast amount of Russian communist literature, above all the Smolensk archive, captured by the Germans, for which Mr. Domínguez has no substitute. Instead, he has to rely on comparatively antique sources, such as opinion polls of the early 1960s, to gain his impressions of how popular the government is; he has not even made much use of the evidence gathered together in Oscar Lewis's monumental analyses. Furthermore, there are several contradictions: on one page, he tells us that "no one person dictates public policy," a very questionable statement about any communist regime, and, on another, more accurately tells us "that proximity to Castro and to the Soviet Union" is the decisive reason whereby one gains power or not. The question of black Cuba seems to be rather perfunctorily considered, though the final conclusion in an appendix that before 1959 as now black Cubans are more likely to be ill, rings true enough. The comment that Raul Castro has had a "long and distinguished career as minister of defense" is the sort of comment that I think anyone should be pardoned for making once in a book of this size, but the latter adjectives seem ill chosen to describe a man who has virtually integrated his country's armed forces into those of the Soviet Union, with whom they will stand or fall in Ethiopia or the Caribbean. Then, too, Mr. Domínguez's language is often heavy going and he sometimes uses words that will have little meaning for those outside the political science departments of US universities.

The book would also have gained if the author had shown more sense of being informed of the historical significance of the Cuban regime, within both the context of Latin America and of totalitarian states in general. Nor does the sheer harshness and the institutionalized adventurism of the regime quite come through, despite an excellent section about the intervention in Angola. The limitations on freedom of thought in education are made evident and so is the centralization and bureaucratization but there is no sense here of what those leaden words actually mean. Living amid the myriad frustrations and secrecies of a controlled society, would the ordinary Cuban recognize in these cautiously constructed chapters anything that reminded him of his own island's problems? It is instructive to notice that in a book devoted to life and politics of the present day in Cuba, a country for many years within the US sphere of influence and only 60 miles from Florida, there is no single quotation from a personal diary, memoir or biography of anyone living in Cuba since 1959. We really know less of what is happening in Cuba now than we know of the island in the 18th century. Travelers' impressions of enthusiastic crowds mean no more than they did in Mussolini's Italy.

Yet there is a great deal, a very great deal, in this book that is really valuable: the careful statistics, for example, about indebtedness to the Soviet Union, the meticulous analysis of the growth of the army, and of the changing policies (and admissions about errors in past policies) toward agriculture. The dry way in which Mr. Domínguez deals with the new National Assembly, which met for the first time in December 1976 and which elected that ancient monument of the 1930s, Blas Roca, as president by 478 votes out of 479, is excellent; while throughout the length of this long book, there are useful insights, as well as useful facts, gathered together for the first time in a convenient manner which will be of benefit to all who study the affairs of this tragic country.

Hugh Thomas

Hugh Thomas is the author of *The Cuban Revolution* (Harper & Row).

A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination by Michael Kammen

(Knopf; $15)

One July Fourth, a Washington TV channel ran Griffith's *America* in the proper tinted form. It was stunning. The Paul Revere character is in love with the daughter of a loyalist taking his family to Canada. Loyalists and patriots thus become Capulets and Montagues. In a "balcony scene," the Revere type stands on his horse's saddle in the blue night, leans against the severe New England clapboard house, and peers into the pink interior of his Juliet's room.

It made me think of loyalists in a new way—and I am glad to see that Michael Kammen had a similar reaction after reading (an heroic task) what one *hopes*

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are all the novels ever written about the American Revolution. It is not a labor any sane man will want to emulate; but it is good to have a shrewd traveler emerge, apparently unharmed, on the other side of that experience with interesting things to tell us.

Griffith did not stimulate by any deep insights of his own into American history. He was obeying the laws of one kind of melodrama—the kind with roots in French neoclassical theater—that pits love against politics. It was a form the Revolutionary period understood, as we see from its absorption in that proto-melodrama of the eighteenth century, Addison's *Cato*—a source at once of Voltaire's Roman plays and of Timothy Dwight's plot in *The Conquest of Canaan*. Kammen finds the same tangle of private loves and public duty in the novels. A parental break, a child's voyage, a desperate maturing, a separation of lovers by war or politics—it is the ancient fictional pattern, here fitted (as what cannot be?) to the private or cultural *rite de passage*. There is nothing uniquely American about this. Voltaire, in his *Mort de César*, made Brutus the *son* in Caesar, to scramble emotions further at the moment of tyrannicide as parricide.

It is mere accident that fiction can, like Griffith's movie, give one a new vantage point for studying old events; and Kammen uses such accident well. But he may be too harsh on the unhappy concomitant of this fiction's formulaic quality. He sees a political motive of trivialization in what was, more likely, the unavoidable result of trivial authors' endeavors.

At a more serious level, Kammen finds an attempt to "contain" the Revolution by stressing its adolescent-break finality rather than its ongoing ideological consequences—a matter Sacvan Berkovitch has been exploring in George Bancroft's work and period. But Kammen does not see what service the "final-break" view once performed. The clash of Hamilton and Jefferson was as much a matter of temperament as ideology; and it circled back, constantly, to various forms of anglophilia and anglophobia. Jefferson had to break the Ptolemaic politics of Hamilton, which made all matters revolve around England. It was important, at that stage, to think of the break with the mother country as making America unique, a place of fresh experiment.

Kammen tells us his chapter on novels is the most important in this book. But I think it will prove more useful in providing a large framework (of periods, issues, personages) for the study of popular culture in America. Any course in that subject could benefit from his bibliography, chronology, and suggestions for further study.

The attempt to sketch a large framework forces Kammen to deal with subjects he is weak in—mainly the visual arts. He tells us, for instance, that interest in Roman symbols like the liberty cap and pole (*pilleus* and *rudis*) was "neither recurrent nor especially resonant" in eighteenth-century England. A glance at Addison's *Dialogues Upon Ancient Medals* would have dispelled that notion. Eighteenth-century gardens-cum-sculpture were dense with Roman emblems (deftly read by Ronald Paulson). In fact, Roman types *came* to America from England, through several clearly traceable channels. The Englishman Thomas Hollis invented a Roman iconography of freedom (including, especially, the *pilleus* and *rudis*) that, sent overseas to Harvard, was picked up by Paul Revere in his engravings. Joseph Wilton, of the Royal Academy, was creating Charleston's Pitt-as-Apollo at the time when Charles Willson Peale, also in England, did his ambitious Pitt-as-Roman-Senator. Frank Sommer has shown that our seated Columbia as Roman goddess (with *pilleus* and *rudis*) was derived from the Britannia created in England by John Baptist Cipriani. Though Kammen later refers to the goddess of youth, Hebe, he seems unaware that her image is behind the Liberty-and-Eagle he connects, fantastically, with Leda and the Swan.

Since his grounding in the classical emblems is weak, Kammen tries to impose too neat a scheme on them, claiming that Liberty gives way to Prosperity (with plow and cornucopia) in the nineteenth century. But the cornucopia was an attribute of Peace, and it entered our art with the signing of the Peace of Paris—as did the plow of Cincinnatus/Washington. (See, e.g., Peale's victory arch or Barralet's engraving of Washington resigning his commission.)

But the strength of a survey is in its breadth, not in its detail. Kammen gives us a framework to fill in and argue with. Graduate students yet unborn will undergo Augean labors like Kammen's with the novels. Their boredom dispelling our ignorance, by their yawns we shall be healed.

Garry Wills

Garry Wills is the author of *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (Doubleday), among other books.

Exile and Return
by Martin Gilbert

(J.B. Lippincott Company; $12.95)

Only a small portion of this general study of the Zionist struggle in the 20th century is based on new documentary evidence. But the material Martin Gilbert relies on in his discussion of the British government's Palestine policy during the Second World War years is of such power and importance that it serves to make *Exile and Return* a major contribution to contemporary history.

To study the actual history of the Holocaust, utterly incomprehensible as much of it is, is to learn only part of the story of man's inhumanity to man during that not so distant past: that of the murderers and the martyrs. But a crime of such magnitude required accomplices, of whom there was no shortage. From Pope Pius XII and his cardinals in their citadel in Rome to the policymakers at the State Department in Washington and in the White House, a silent world was guilty of one vast and protracted sin of omission. Six million Jews, among them a million and a half children—to say nothing of Gypsies and other racial and political undesirables—were slaughtered in the heart of Europe. No one came to their rescue, not from the East and not from the West. Those who failed to raise their voices when they might have—and thereby gave the Nazi program of genocide a stamp of tacit approval—were also guilty in more specific and deliberate ways: the State Department was unwilling to tamper with established quotas and allow refugee ships to unload their human cargo at American ports; the War Department refused to consider feasible

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schemes for bombing the extermination facilities at Auschwitz-Birkenau or the railway lines leading to the death camp. This is a sordid aspect of the larger tragedy which has been told in part (Henry Feingold's *The Politics of Rescue*, Arthur Morse's *While Six Million Died*), but still requires further treatment. For the most part, however, this crime was one of silence, silence despite full knowledge that mass murder on a hitherto unimagined scale was going on.

This sin of silence created one kind of accomplice to genocide among the presumed enemies and adversaries of Hitler and Nazism. But the behavior of Great Britain and the conduct of British policy during the period in question allowed London officialdom, and some of His Majesty's diplomats abroad, to assume a unique activist role in advancing the German extermination design. Martin Gilbert brings special skills to his investigation of this subject. As the official biographer of Winston Churchill, he is fully familiar with British archival material related to the Second World War years.

Part I of this book, entitled "Israel Dispersed," is a general survey of 1900 years of the Jewish people in exile from the destruction of the Second Temple and the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt by the Romans in the first century, through the early years of political Zionism before the First World War. It is a familiar chronicle of persecution and pogroms alternating with periods of tolerance and even Golden Ages. Of particular interest in this rather broad background section is Gilbert's discussion of the precarious condition of Jews living under Muslim rule in the 19th century. From Damascus to Meshed, and from Libya to Morocco, Jews were subjected to severe maltreatment less than 100 years ago: it is well to note that the steady tide of persecution discussed here preceded the advent of Zionist settlement in Palestine, which some would still wish to see as the root cause of all Jewish suffering in the Arab world in this century. For his review of the early years of the Zionist movement, Gilbert makes good use of an interesting and infrequently tapped source, the detailed and perceptive letters of a young Zionist politician, Chaim Weizmann, to his fiancée, Vera Khatzman. Here, and in the early pages of Part II, "From National Home to Sovereign State," the roots of what has been called "Weizmannism"—a form of Zionism oriented toward symbolic, legally secured diplomatic achievements, even at the expense of practical accomplishments—is nicely illustrated in a series of well chosen quotations.

But while the diplomatic machinations of the pre-Balfour period, the Hussayn-McMahon correspondence, the Balfour Declaration itself, and the first 15 years of Britain's League of Nations Palestine Mandate are all thoroughly analyzed by Gilbert, his work is drawn largely from more specific documentary studies and, while excellent as summary, serves primarily to provide an historical context for the core of this book—the period of World War II.

It is a tragic fact of Jewish history that at the precise moment when the profound truth of the Zionist message became apparent to the masses in the European diaspora, the nation to which the authority for carrying out the National Home scheme had been delegated—Great Britain—had reached a critical juncture in an ongoing process of decline. The England of 1938 was a vastly different country from the one which had issued the Balfour Declaration on the eve of victory in the First World War and had formally accepted the Palestine Mandate in 1922. The heady days of Rule Britannia had clearly

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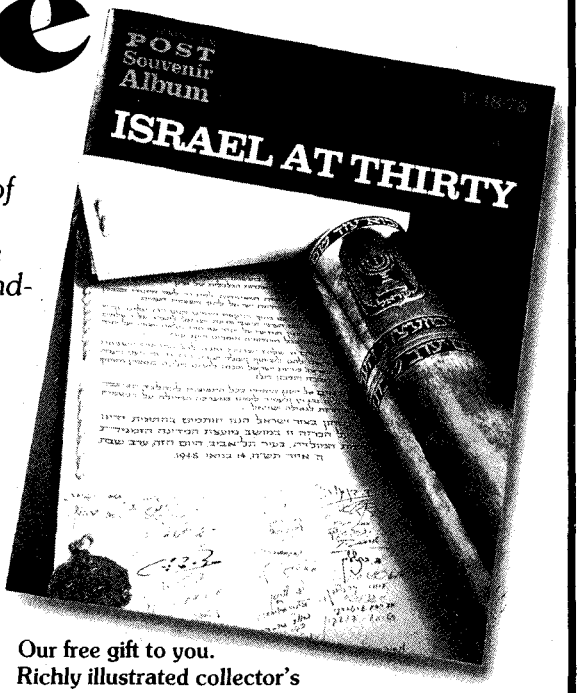

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passed, but the post-Second World War collapse of the empire was not yet envisioned. In the unhappy interim, a frightened ruling elite in London hoped to weather what seemed a severe storm, and salvage as much as possible—in terms of possessions, not prestige or self-respect—in anticipation of better days. It was in this context that the crucial international diplomacy of the late 1930s was conducted. The "spirit of appeasement" which led to Munich also informed British Near Eastern and Palestine policy, resulting in the 1939 White Paper which violated the Balfour pledge.

As Gilbert painstakingly demonstrates, the alien character of the political leadership of the violent 1936-1939 Arab insurrection in Palestine was no secret to the local British administration in Jerusalem, to the embassies elsewhere in the Middle East, or to Foreign and Colonial Office officials at home. Malcolm MacDonald, the colonial secretary and subsequently the author of the White Paper, expressed the view repeatedly throughout 1938 that the anti-Jewish, anti-British terrorist rampages were the work of non-Palestinian elements allied with and led by the exiled pro-Nazi Grand Mufti of Jerusalem:

> *. . . this picture seemed to indicate that the terrorist movement as such amongst the Arabs was not a spontaneous national movement of the Palestinian Arabs as a whole, but the result of strenuous agitation by political leaders and the activity, no doubt often accompanied by intimidation, of bands of banditti who had no genuine political significance, but were delighted at the chance to fish in troubled waters.*

Elsewhere, on other occasions, MacDonald made it known in no uncertain terms that all evidence indicated the responsibility of the Mufti for the violence. Thus at the very time that Britain was convening the St. James Conference (the final pre-war effort to bring about an Arab-Jewish rapprochement) it was clear to London that general Palestinian Arab policy was dictated by the Mufti and his supporters.

At the same time, regular dispatches from British consuls and attachés all over Germany painted a clear picture of the increasing tempo of the Nazi anti-Semitic campaign, which reached a preliminary crescendo with *Kristaalnacht* on the ninth of November, 1938. Even the early horrors of Dachau were detailed by a particularly enterprising diplomat, John Cawell, the Consul-General in Munich, in January of 1939. And the Evian Conference organized by President Roosevelt, at which Britain saw to it that Zionist representation was barred, had already demonstrated that no nation was willing to provide even symbolic refuge for those already suffering or those whose turn was imminent.

The White Paper of 1939 is a document truly worthy of the era of Munich. The setting of 75,000 as the upper limit on the number of Jews who would be permitted to enter Palestine over a five-year period (after which time Jewish immigration would be subject to Arab veto) came exactly one week after the German occupation of Prague, when 118,000 Czech Jews fell into the clutches of the Nazis. As Czechs and as Jews, this group of people had been twice betrayed by England within six months. Some 26,000 of this relatively affluent community were still able to leave Bohemia and Moravia before the outbreak of the war, though even for a portion of these, the end was only postponed. Of the 92,000 who remained, more than 80,000 perished in Auschwitz and Theresienstadt.

The duplicity and callousness of implementing the White Paper policy at all is clear enough. Where this book is enlightening is in its proof of the diligence and thoroughness with which the anti-refugee measures were carried out by the British government, from the very first, even before the document itself was published, throughout the war years and beyond. Pressure was brought to bear on all governments from whose ports the miserable, unseaworthy tramp steamers packed with Jews would embark, to prohibit "the refugee traffic." According to the official minutes of a May 1939 Inter-Departmental Conference, at which Foreign Office and Colonial Office representatives were present, it was decided that admitting Jewish refugees to Palestine "must be avoided at almost any cost." Earlier, H.F. Downie, head of the Colonial Office's Middle East Department, had protested to the Foreign Office against the suggestion of Sir Sidney Waterlow, the British Minister in Athens, that "a number of Jewish illegal immigrants should be admitted to Palestine on humanitarian grounds." Downie thought Waterlow's suggestion "rather surprising." But there was little to worry about: Waterlow was soon reporting his success in persuading the Greek government not to issue even transit visas to Jewish refugees, whether bound for Palestine or elsewhere. In his thoroughness Waterlow doomed a number of "legal" immigrants along with the "illegals."

Gilbert documents the fate of the refugee ships which made their way toward Palestine after the war had begun. The "Milos" and the "Pacific" reached Haifa with 1771 Jews aboard; they were promptly deported to Mauritius at the order of Palestine's High Commissioner Sir Harold MacMichael. Transferred to a French liner, the "Patria," the refugees waited in Haifa Bay while another immigrant ship, the "Atlantic," was escorted in by the Royal Navy. The British thought to kill three birds with one stone and crowd the 1783 aboard the "Atlantic" onto the "Patria" for the trip to Mauritius. But while the first 200 Jews were being transferred, the "Patria" blew itself up and more than 250 of its passengers drowned. Affecting a humanitarian posture, London announced that the "Patria" survivors would be admitted to Palestine, while those still aboard the "Atlantic" would be deported (this despite the protest of General Wavell, the British commander-in-chief in the Middle East, who demanded that all be deported). The number of "Patria" survivors who were allowed to enter Palestine was, of course, deducted from the monthly White Paper total. As for those sent to Mauritius, despite Churchill's insistence that the deportees be "decently treated" there, S.E.V. Luke of the Colonial Office saw to it that their conditions "should be sufficiently punitive to continue to act as a deterrent to other Jews in Eastern Europe." This trenchant strategy is best complemented by that of Luke's counterpart at the Foreign Office, G.M. Warr of the Western Department, who was interested in stopping "illegal" immigration at its source: "The only hope is that all the German Jews will be stuck at the mouths of the Danube for lack of ships to take them."

The hard line went on, even intensified, as word of "large scale massacres of Jews in Poland" reached the War Cabinet. A proposal to admit 4500 Bulgarian Jews to Palestine was vetoed on "security grounds." Indeed the security issue was freely raised whenever the possibility of granting a small number entry was raised; the notion that Axis agents would be planted among the Jews headed for Palestine seemed to obsess more than one British official. Interestingly, in the post-war period, the British often

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sought to gain American support for the policy of turning back refugee ships by confiding that "intelligence reports" indicated that Soviet agents had infiltrated themselves among the displaced persons aboard the ships.

In the end, a sincere desire to appease the Arabs for reasons of state, a strong pro-Arab clique in the Foreign and Colonial Offices, latent anti-Semitism among key officials, and a diplomatic competence at bullying less powerful states, helped to make the policy of barring Jews from refuge in Palestine one of the best executed of the war. By May 1944, even the White Paper quota of 75,000 had not been filled.

Gilbert devotes his final chapters to the last three years of the Mandate, which saw Ernest Bevin's "squalid war" against the immigrant ships, the Jewish revolt in Palestine, the Anglo-American attempt to break the impasse, and finally the United Nations Partition Resolution and the rather dubious circumstances of British withdrawal. To these subjects too, he brings significant new documentary evidence. As before, there is little pretty in British policy during this phase. But at least the end, though posponed, was a dismal failure. Would that the same could be said of the earlier period.

Eric Breindel

Eric Breindel is writing a book about the assassinations of Lord Moyne and Count Folke Bernadotte for Random House.

Brief Reviews

The Collected Poems of Muriel Rukeyser

(McGraw-Hill; $17.50)

When Muriel Rukeyser read at the Folger Shakespeare Library recently she said, in reference to this book, "I feel as if I should change my name now, and start all over," expressing an ambivalence which we readers share when faced with the "collected poems" of someone still very much alive: we feel robbed of one of the chief satisfactions such a volume affords—the opportunity to form some complete overview, some sense of the author's total accomplishment. How disconcerting to think that, even as we read, the author is writing something else which might change the configuration. Disconcerting, yet in a way comforting. Come to think of it, why shouldn't she "start all over?"

Muriel Rukeyser's work is vigorous and intense enough for several lifetimes. When she burst upon the literary scene in 1935 as a Yale Younger Poet, at the age of 21, her poetry had already appeared in *The New Republic* and *Poetry*, which, along with *The Saturday Review* and *The Nation*, have continued to publish her work over the years. The prizewinning book, *Theory of Flight*, was an immediate success and went into several printings. Critics praised its rugged technique, its synthesis of symbolism and socialism. She was, to say the least, a refreshing change from Millay, Teasdale and Wylie.

Early in life she assumed the role of social activist. She says, in a much quoted phrase from "Poem Out of Childhood:" "Not Sappho, Sacco." As a young reporter for *The Student Review* she covered the Scottsboro trial, described in *Theory of Flight*. Exploring the northeast, she drove south from Maine to West Virginia, where she found the subject of her second book—miners dying from silicosis (*U.S.1*, 1938). More recent poems reflect her involvement in the peace movement and, as a past president of P.E.N., her concern with defending the freedom of writers everywhere.

In *A Turning Wind* (1939) her brief portraits of Americans—Willard Gibbs, Albert Ryder, John Jay Chapman, Ann Burlak, and Charles Ives—mark a growing interest in biography. (She later wrote a complete biography of Gibbs.) *One Life* (1957) is an odd, discursive book revolving around the life of Wendell Willkie; more successful as poems are the antic "Suite for Lord Timothy Dexter," (*Body of Waking*, 1958) and two from *Speed of Darkness* (1968), "Käthe Kollwitz" and "Akiba." (Akiba was a Jewish shepherd-scholar whose history shades into myth.)

Rukeyser also depicts characters from Greek mythology, including the Sphinx and, not surprisingly, that great proto-poet, Orpheus. The larger-than-life stance is one which she frequently adopts herself with varying success:

Leaves like yesterday shed, the yellow of green spring
Like today accepted and become one's self
I go, I am a city with bridges and tunnels,
Rock, cloud, ships, voices.

("The Island," *Waterlily Fire* [1962])

Her elevated diction and extravagant imagery have been both praised and censured. Recent work is noticeably less Dionysian and more direct, in poems like "Resurrection of the Right Side" and "St. Roach" (*The Gates*).

She has not revised or excerpted the poems from the 12 books that make up this collection (as she did in the *Selected Poems*, 1951), thus preserving their value as an historical record. The few footnotes are extremely helpful; one wishes there were more. One trusts there will be more poems, more singing, more "breath[ing] in experience, breath[ing] out poetry."

Jane Flanders

Jane Flanders is a Washington, DC writer. A book of her poetry, *Leaving and Coming Back*, will be published soon by *The Quarterly Review of Literature*.

The Great American Newspaper by Kevin McAuliffe

(Charles Scribner's Sons; $14.95)

What has happened to *The Village Voice?* It began in 1955, as a community newspaper; it died in 1974, when it became a Felkerized shadow of its former self; and though it may emerge once more as a generation's chronicle, it will never be, in the words of historian Kevin McAuliffe, "the energy center . . . it once had been."

McAuliffe's hero is Dan Wolf, the founder of the paper whose influence and "magic," as he calls it, allowed the paper and its writers to thrive. Wolf would print articles slipped in under the

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door by unknown writers and put them on the front page. He would give community leaders like Mary Perot Nichols and failed reporters like Jack Newfield the time and space to fulfill their goals as writers.

McAuliffe follows Wolf through the *Voice*'s past; and for him and many others the real *Voice* ended not with Rupert Murdoch, its current owner, but with Clay Felker, who bought the paper in 1974 and whose wild-eyed approach to coverage has since swept through American journalism and may help to destroy it. Felker's style reflects not only the worst in publishing taste but also one of the most popular—with readers and advertisers. From 1955, when Wolf founded it, to 1974, the *Voice* changed as dramatically as the society around it. What the *Voice* is today, McAuliffe says, it could not have been 23 years ago; and in explaining why, he has written a passionate and compelling history of the past quarter-century.

David Blum

David Blum is a freelance writer in New York.

Correspondence, *from page 7*

jackass" John Osborne considered to be an idiocy ("White House Watch," *TNR*, December 16). If it was his unctuously righteous tone, or his suggestion that some unspecified church, or anybody else, ought to have paid for bringing the Peoples Temple bodies back from Guyana, I have no quarrel with his classification. I regret, however, the ambiguity which leaves an objection to the US government's undertaking of this project under the shadow of his scorn. Surely there are few greater idiocies than the American (and it does seem to be peculiarly American) preoccupation with where our dead are buried. Rupert Brooke found inspiration in the thought that his burial abroad would effect a kind of cross-cultural fertilization. Was he an idiot? Is any private or public good achieved by shipping putatively American skeletons from Vietnam or putrescent American corpses from Guyana other than that of the American mortuary industry?

David F. Ross
Lexington, Kentucky

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Diarist Abroad

Zurich is the crossroads of the world, at least for those in search of secure places to invest or simply sequester ill-gotten gains. Changing planes, I stopped in Zurich for two hours—enough time to see scores of shady types in just about every ethnic mug (perhaps a few deposed dictators, some arms merchants and doubtless many ordinary thugs) scurrying to hedge their bets against chance and history.

Two hours was enough time also to experience once more the eclipse of American standing among the affluent peoples. From the airport telephone center I dialed London direct for a four or five minute call, and was charged $21. I was too embarrassed to say anything; it must have been my face that registered the surprise. The stern *schweizerdeutsch* woman behind the counter flung her guttural voice at me: "Your dollar, mister, your dollar is worth nothing." Down the corridor I plunked down $1.10 for the 12-page *International Herald Tribune*, methadone to a heroin addict.

Golda Meir once told me that, as Israel's Foreign Minister, she paid a state visit to Switzerland and laid a wreath at a monument for one of its war-era leaders "who while Europe burned"—said the bronze encomium—"protected our property and lives." I've always been vexed by the high-minded neutrality of the Swiss, grown fat and smug on the misfortunes of others. But a devastatingly documented, if too trendily *gauchiste*, new book, *Switzerland: The Awful Truth* by Jean Ziegler (Harper & Row), amasses so much evidence to support anyone's worst feelings about Swiss venality that I feel vindicated in what I'd feared was only a base prejudice. All but the very young remember Orson Welles's smart-alecky Harry Lime in *The Third Man*. "In Italy for 30 years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, bloodshed. They produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love, 500 years of democracy and peace, and what did they produce? The cuckoo clock." Harry Lime, of course, was wrong about Swiss history, which was hardly so benign. He was also wrong about its result, which is much less banal than the cuckoo clock. The Marx scholar André Gorz once said that "Switzerland does not exist." He may be correct. But it is the anonymous banker of a cruel economic order.

A friend in Paris forked over 140 francs for Arthur Schlesinger's *Robert Kennedy and His Times*. That's nearly $40. But why shouldn't hagiography be expensive in our time? In any case, the cost of principle is beyond reach. Ditto for just the smallest bit of bravery. A slimy little tale emerged recently from the sewers of Paris. The same *International Herald Tribune* for which I'd paid my dollar-plus-some in Zurich has been regularly eliminating classified and display advertisements placed by Israelis and Israeli firms from a special edition of 3000 copies it distributes in the Arab world. The *Trib* doesn't bother with this special run for Moslem capitals every day—only when there's offending Jewish content in the regular edition, which is replaced by house ads. Otherwise, it's the identical paper. The paper's editor, one Murray Weiss, confirmed this story, with what heart no one knows. From Katherine Graham or Punch Sulzberger or Jock Whitney, the *Trib*'s three owners, no word yet. Probably no word ever.

The Europeans understand the role of religious frenzy in history. It's a major part of their own past, but not much of ours. This is why they understand somewhat—and why we don't at all—the events in Turkey and Iran. On any scale or measure, the mullahs represent the dark ages. They can summon the mob and flame its passions—to kill and to die. These violent passions arise for militant Islam as a whole. (What other world religion can still make this claim?) But they are also available for its hardened sects and furious illuminations. It's also quite conceivable that these risings from the heart of darkness will be instruments of and facades for modern totalitarian ideologies—Qaddafi style, for instance. One of the ironies in the situation is that those "progressives" who revel in the shah's troubles and ours in Iran—quite distinguishable troubles, I think—believe that having millions rioting in the street, incited by the reactionary mullahs, serves the interest of the left. How complex it all is, and how damned unreasonable. Among other reasons, this is why I despair at reading that President Carter seeks counsel for hour after hour, again and again, from Dr. Brzezinski and Mr. Jerry Rafshoon.

Exiled revolutionaries sojourning in France are normally muzzled by their French hosts. So there's been more than ordinary surprise about the liberties which Giscard's government has allowed the Ayatollah Khomeini who has more or less been orchestrating a revolution from the comfortable suburbs of Paris. What could the French have in mind? A very distinguished American scholar, specializing in Persian culture, recently visited the ayatollah at his headquarters. Khomeini told him blithely that Moslems do not kill Moslems. Pressed about the daily fratricide in Iran, Khomeini had a simple explanation: "The shah uses Israeli troops." One British Arabist says of the mullahs' candidate, "Khomeini will make the shah seem like Santa Claus."

The French philosopher Bernard Henri-Levy and his circle of independent intellectuals are yet again insistent on speaking truth to power concretely. They hope to charter an oceanworthy boat and sail it into the South China Sea to pick up refugees for whom politicians have wrung their hands but done little. The ship would then carry the boat people to a port of some advanced country—France, Japan, America?—and test whether conscience can influence policy. That is to say, they would ask for refuge and asylum. What's your guess? These stateless and hopeless people, like the sea-tossed remnant Jews of Nazi-occupied Europe, are an inconvenience to everybody. Why don't they just go away? They are also an offense to many. In France, the Communist party sees the refugees' cause—their very existence, in fact—as a threat to the current resolution of events in Vietnam—even as a repudiation of it. Levy has drawn George Marchais, the French Communist party chief, into a dramatic and revealing polemic about today's refugees in Indochina and also about the Jewish problem, then and now. One of the things I've been wondering about is why the Quakers, so humanely and remonstratively involved in the recent history of Vietnam, have not taken up the rescue of these escapees from tyranny as their own cause.

M.P.

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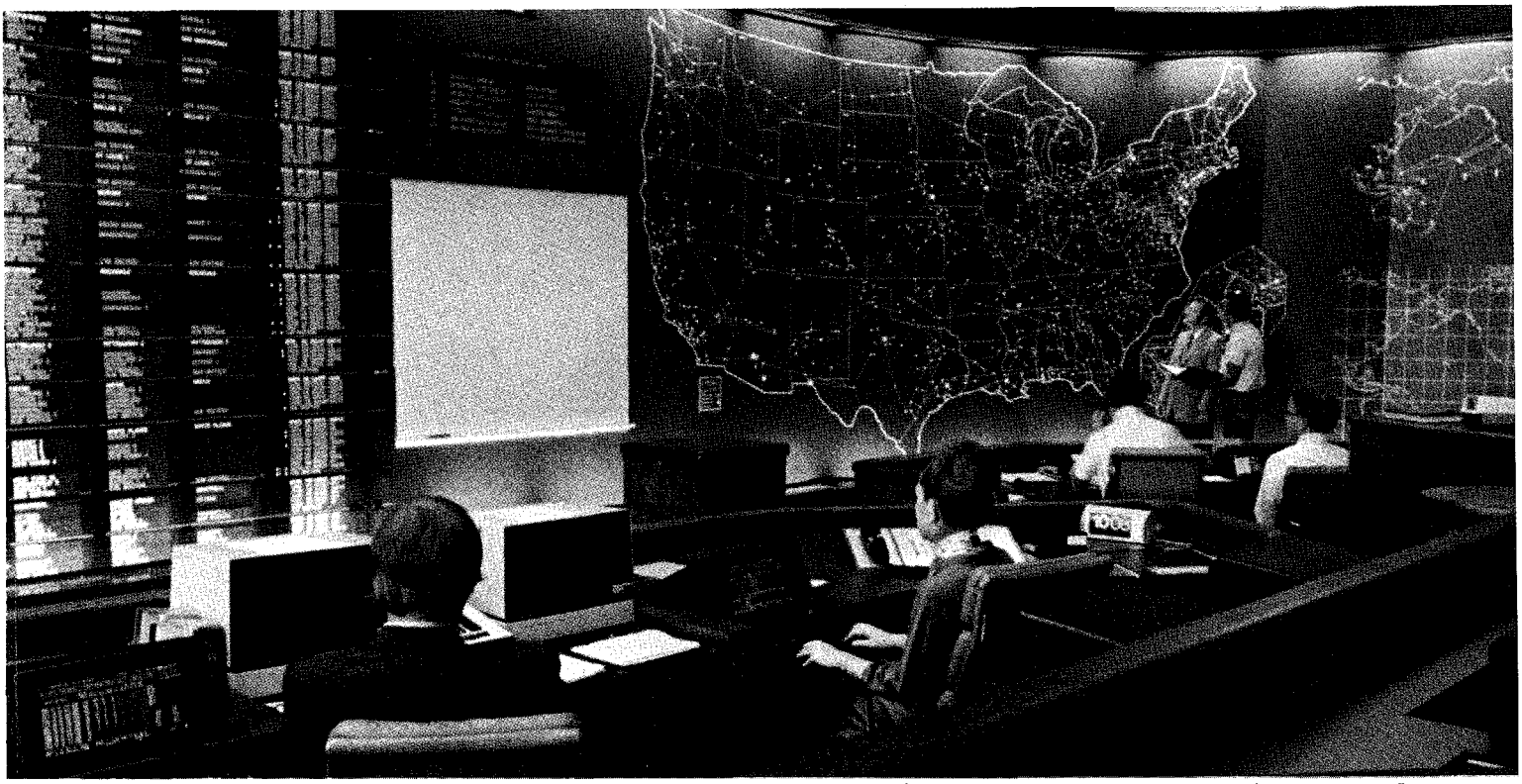

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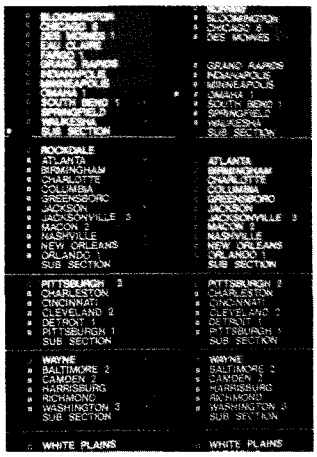

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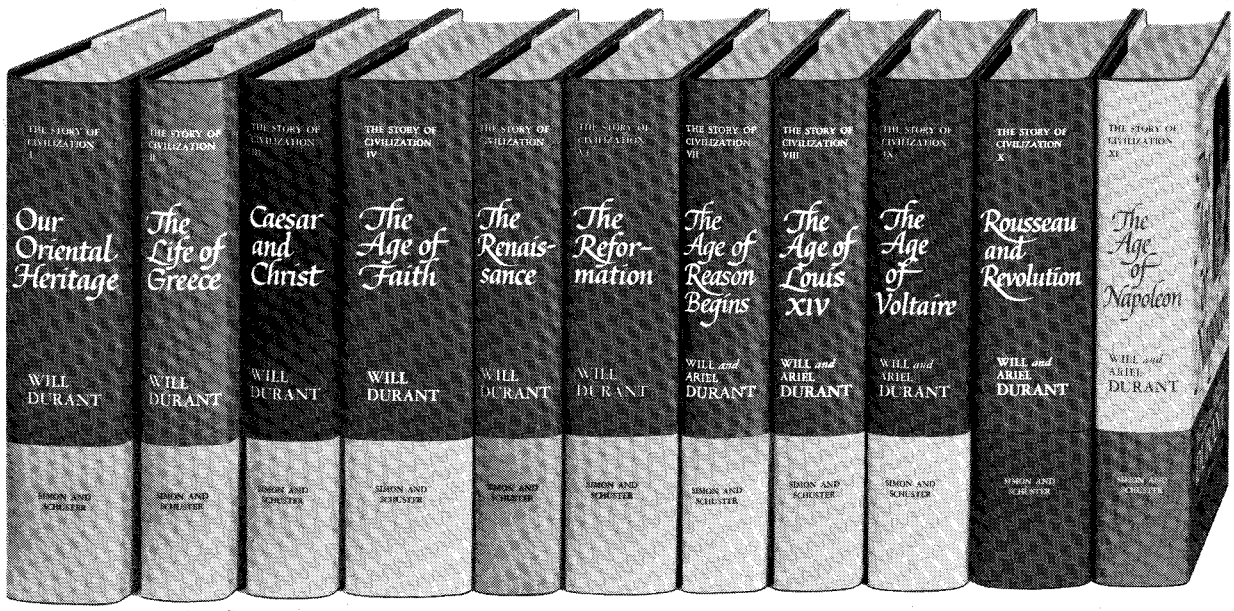

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